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THE THORESBY SOCIETY

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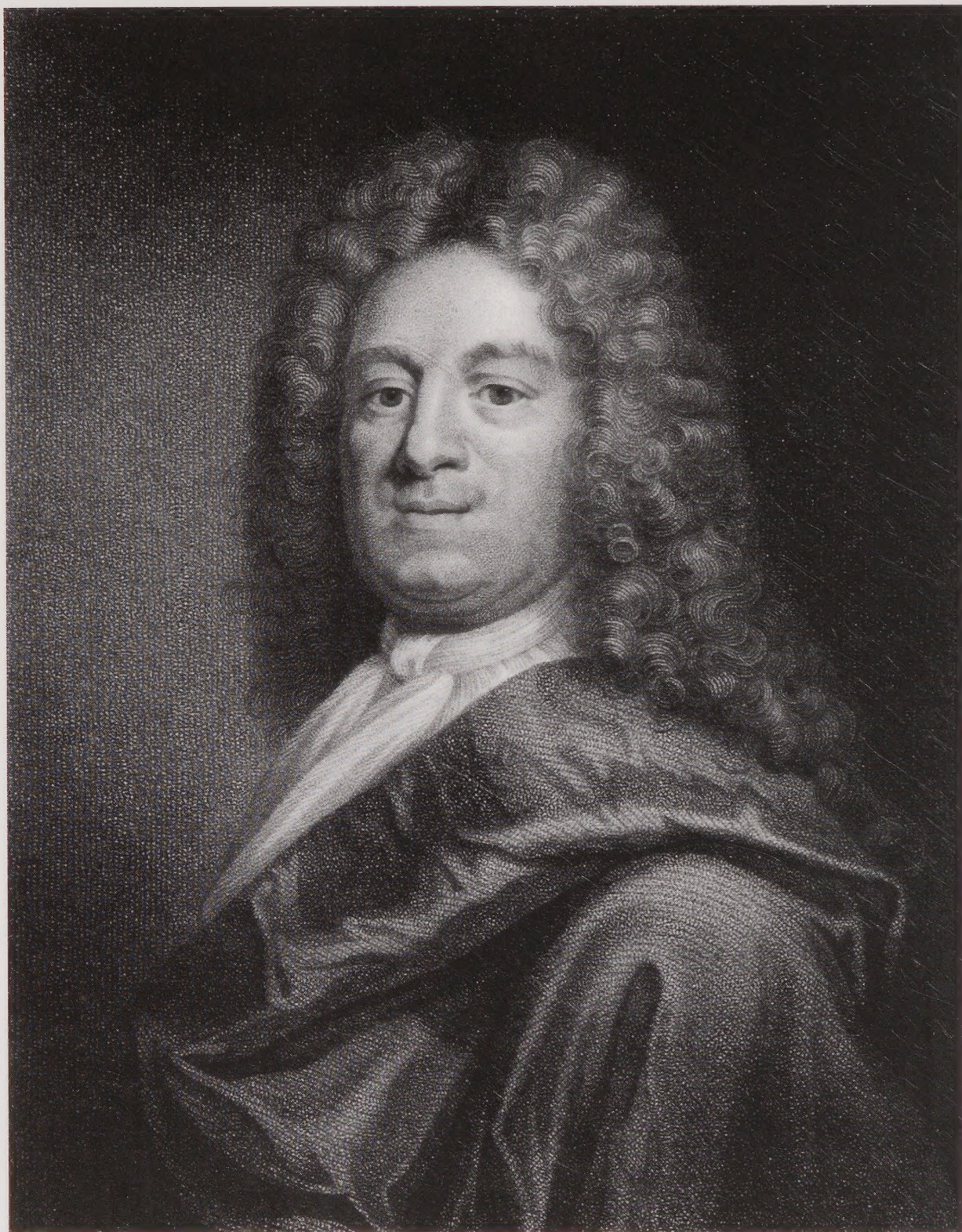
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VOLUME LXIV
for 1989



Ralph Thoresby, FRS, 1658–1725: the first Leeds historian.

An engraving by W. Holl taken from Thoresby's Ducatus, (1816 edn.).

Leeds in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries

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Preface

It was decided that it would be appropriate to focus our centenary edition on seventeenth and early eighteenth century Leeds, the years when Ralph Thoresby was living in the town. Two of our long serving members have contributed the bulk of the work. Joan Kirby, a previous editor, has provided a detailed study on ‘The Aldermen of Leeds (1626–1700)’ whilst Gordon Forster, a previous president, has re-drafted a series of four lectures on seventeenth-century Leeds: ‘The Roots of Incorporation and Jacobean Leeds’; ‘Leeds under the First Charter of Incorporation’; ‘Leeds in the Civil War and Interregnum’; and ‘The Government of Restoration Leeds’. He has also provided a detailed history of the Thoresby Society itself. We are particularly pleased to be able to include *The Prospect of Leedes in Yorkshire From Chaveler Hill* by one of our past patrons, Professor Maurice Beresford. Although it was still in draft form — ill health had prevented him producing a final copy before his death in 2005 — we decided to include his work not only for its intrinsic historical value but also as a token of respect to a man who had done so much for the Thoresby Society.

We have used as the background for our Centenary Edition cover the front cover of the society’s first-ever publication. Over the years, the society’s lectures and visits as well as its publications have gained a reputation for academic excellence of which its members are justly proud. We look forward to our next hundred years with the same enthusiasm that our founding members demonstrated when Victoria was Queen and Leeds was not yet a city.

We would like to thank two previous editors, Rosemary Stephens and Joan Kirby, for the work they did on the initial planning of this publication and Brian Chippendale for his help in preparing the final stages. We are also most grateful to the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society for their generous contribution towards publishing costs. We are now delighted that at last we are able to bring to you our Centenary Edition planned for 1989. We can only apologise for its delay in appearing.

Ann Alexander
David Thornton
Editors, the Thoresby Society

Part One — Four Presidential Lectures on Seventeenth-Century Leeds

G. C. F. Forster, BA, FSA, FRHistS

I—The Roots of Incorporation and Jacobean Leeds^{*}

I

When Leeds became an incorporated borough in 1626, the documents make no mention of the charter of 1207. Nevertheless, that charter marks the limited beginnings of Leeds as a town, and in order to understand developments of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it is important to know something of its provisions. Described by Professor John Le Patourel as a ‘modest charter’ and a modest scheme,¹ it was a speculative venture, offering to those who dwelt or would come to dwell in the ‘new town’ essential liberties and privileges: personal freedom; free tenure with a fixed rent for tenements (or burgages); a borough court with a more flexible procedure than the typical manorial court; the possibility of building workshops; a limited exemption from tolls. There was no provision for self-government, or for markets, fairs, and guilds, and the lord of the manor, Maurice Paynel, reserved the right to appoint officials, to hold manorial courts, to levy certain financial dues, and to exercise the seigneurial monopoly of the common oven and the corn mill. Thirteenth-century Leeds was, therefore, a borough — laid out in what became Briggate — *within* the wider area of the manor and the even more extensive framework of the parish. Although farming was central to the local economy, before 1300 there was a market which attracted increasing amounts of trade, and there were weavers, fullers and dyers in Leeds. The more abundant records of the fourteenth century indicate growing trade and industrial activity, with newly established fairs, more stalls and shops in the market, as well as new tenters, fulling mills, and dye-vats for the expanding cloth industry of the district; there were also new quarries and

^{*} As the seventeenth-century presidential lectures were given between 1980 and 1984, it was necessary to begin each one with some economic, social and topographical details. To avoid unnecessary repetition I have put that material in the first lecture, as a context for the slow evolution of an ‘urban identity’ and corporate activity (for want of more elegant terms). In the other lectures it will only be necessary to make brief reference to the economic, social and topographical framework in order to make sense of what is being discussed in the particular lecture. The only changes to the general expression of the lectures otherwise is the omission of domestic remarks, colloquialism, repetition for emphasis, and signpost phrases.

¹ John Le Patourel, ‘Medieval Leeds’, *P(ublications of the) Th(oresby) S(ociety)*, XLVI (1963), 16.

intakes of land from the waste. Following a period of stagnation, perhaps depression, from the later fourteenth century to the mid fifteenth century, the signs are that the clothmaking industry of the West Riding grew markedly, an expansion in which Leeds was well placed to participate, and it was probably about this time that, with the manorial tenants already enjoying the same freedom as the burgesses, the borough court and the manorial courts were merged.

By then, Leeds was a 'gateway' town on the border between the farming economy of the Vale of York and the rural textile industry of the region to the south, west and north-west, for the small-scale domestic production of which Leeds and Wakefield had come to be the main markets.

In the early sixteenth century, Leeds was second to Wakefield in the cloth district but during that century it benefited from rapid industrial development in the Aire valley and, after 1580, overtook Wakefield in size and in scale of industrial activity. By 1600, it was an active finishing centre, a vital collecting point for local products, cloth from the villages and hamlets being funnelled into Leeds for dressing, cropping and dyeing; it was also an increasingly busy market, where wool and foodstuffs could be bought and cloth sold. That growth of Leeds coincided with the increased production of dyed cloth to meet growing demand in the Baltic region and the Low Countries, and with the marked expansion of the port of Hull. The changing direction and organisation of the trade in broadcloth and northern dozens served to bring in newcomers — merchants or merchant-manufacturers often with a background in the minor gentry or prosperous yeomanry — who put down roots, having been attracted by the investment opportunities presented by a developing commercial centre with a lively land market stimulated by sales of former monastic property in the neighbourhood. Industrial development was reflected in growing wealth, physical expansion, immigration, and rising population which, despite sporadic outbreaks of plague, possibly doubled between the mid 1570s and the mid 1620s from something over three thousand to almost six thousand.

The crude plan of 1560 shows that there was already expansion from Briggate, the nucleus of the medieval 'new town', for, by then, buildings had spread into Marsh Lane, Vicar Lane, Quarry Hill and Mabgate to the east, as well as along the Headrow to the north; the village round the parish church had coalesced with Briggate (Figure 1). Manorial surveys of 1612 and 1628 reveal further development²: more copyhold tenure and new freeholds; the enclosure of the open fields; building along Boar Lane, Mill Hill and Swinegate; the infilling of vacant land behind the frontages of buildings along the main streets; and the multiplication of cottages and workshops. Away from 'close compacted' Briggate there was space for

² *The Manor and Borough of Leeds, 1425–1662: an Edition of Documents*, ed. by Joan W. Kirby, *PThS*, LVII (1983), 72–205; M. W. Beresford, 'Leeds in 1628: A "Ridinge Observation" from the City of London', *N(orthern) H(istory)*, X (1975), 126–40.

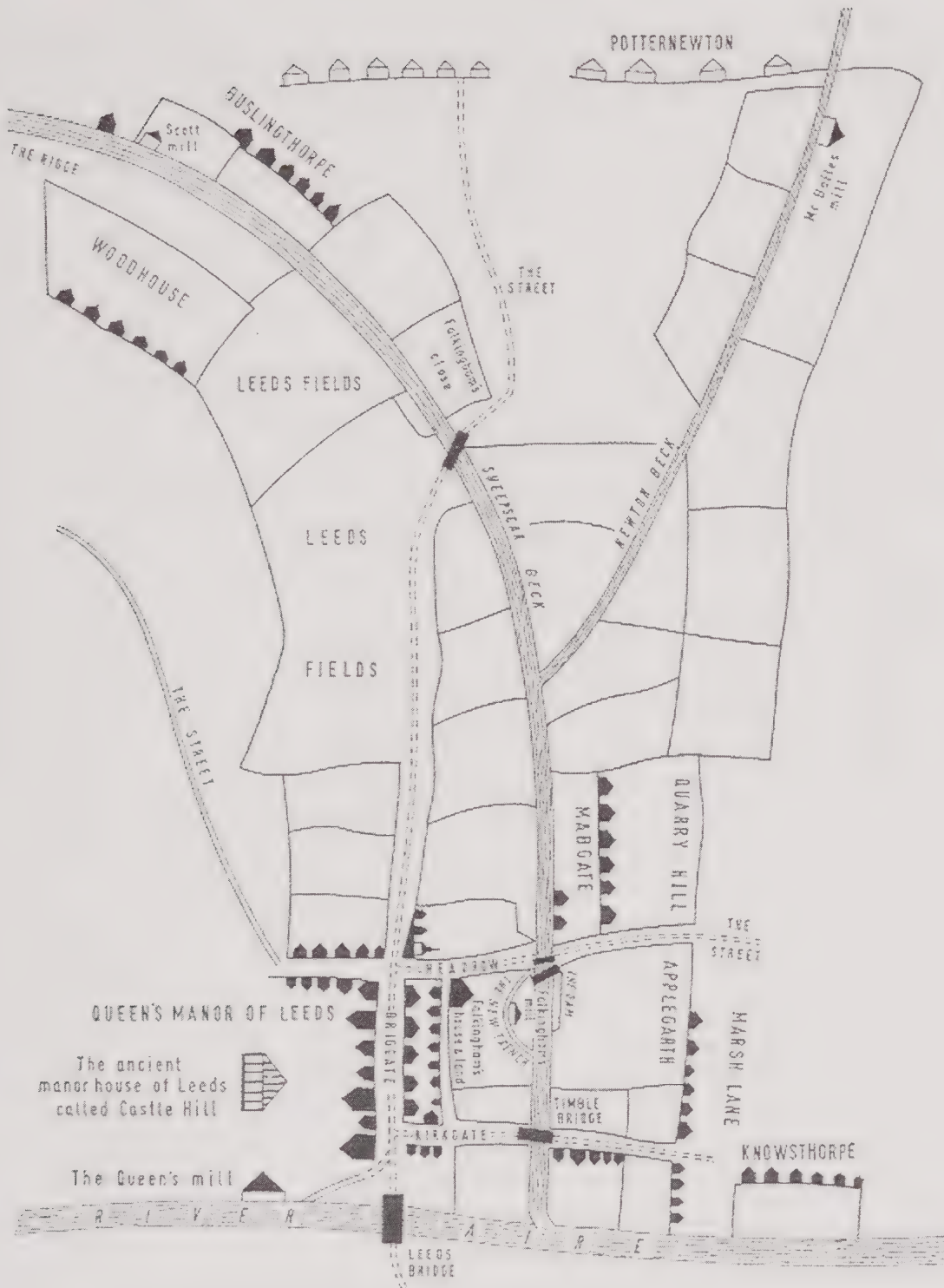


FIGURE 1 Leeds in 1560. A reconstruction based on the original in The National Archives at Kew.

From The Thoresby Society, Leeds City Libraries and the Yorkshire Evening Post's *Leeds in Maps*
(2007)

gardens and orchards, for woolhedges, tenter grounds and dye-vats, for some coal mines, for some small closes whether used for farming or tenting, with fulling mills or corn mills on the lesser streams which

flowed into the Aire. Such was the face of Jacobean Leeds, which also had a few large houses, small chapels, and 'a verie faire church built after a Cathedrall structure and having one side thereof double-Iled'.³

II

What was church life like in mid-Tudor Leeds?⁴ The Cistercian abbey of Kirkstall, on the outskirts of the parish, had been dissolved without apparent resistance in November 1539, a few of the ex-monks continuing to serve as chantry priests in the district until the chantries too were abolished. But there were no active reforming preachers in Leeds and, after the dissolution of the chantries in the parish church and the chapels-of-ease, there were fewer endowments and therefore fewer clergy to minister to the people. For their part, the laity showed their support for the old ways in religion, continuing with such traditional observances and forms of piety as avowedly Catholic invocations in their wills, gifts for ceremonies, and bequests for requiems and prayers for the dead. In Leeds, there were no early Protestant 'heretics' or martyrs, nothing to add drama to the local history of the Reformation; it was indeed something of a 'negative Reformation'. Into this situation the Revd Alexander Fawcett, who became vicar in 1559, fitted well for he was clearly no vigorous Protestant enthusiast; he was described as a 'dumb dog' (a comment on his lack of preaching ability), he launched no attack on Catholic survivalism and began no campaign for godliness and Reform.

Nevertheless, there had already been some signs of a stirring Protestantism amongst some of the leading laymen. In the reign of Edward VI, for example, a group of them had collaborated to rescue certain chantry endowments from confiscation in order to use them for the benefit of the newly founded or re-founded grammar school, a benefaction made to advance Protestant education as a weapon against Popery. There were also signs in lay circles of a questioning of traditional Catholic teaching about the sacraments and about the use of images and the invocation of saints: in Mary's reign fourteen parishioners, described in the record as 'bussy fellowes of the new sorte', were accused of holding heretical (i.e. Protestant) opinions on those matters and had been disciplined by the Church courts. The growing vitality of reforming opinions during the lax regime of Fawcett's vicariate is revealed in the significant events of 1588. By then,

³. Beresford, *NH*, X, 136.

⁴. C. Cross, *Urban Magistrates and Ministers* (University of York, Borthwick Paper No. 67, 1985), *passim*.

Vicar Fawcett had grown old, inactive and almost blind, a state of affairs which gave some determined laymen the chance and the motive to work for an improvement in local religious life. Accordingly they joined together to purchase the advowson, the right of presentation to the vicarage of Leeds, which had been annexed by the Crown at the Dissolution and had passed through several hands before being in the possession of a London citizen; they secured it for £130, the original price having been reduced by £20 at the behest of the Earl of Huntingdon, Lord President of the Council in the North and a supporter of enthusiastic Protestant (or Puritan) teachings and clergy. The identity of the purchasers is not known but they were described as 'generally well addicted to the religion established, and desirous of better means of instruction' and had resolved to purchase the advowson 'that they might be furnished with honest, learned and able Ministers'.⁵ Thus, the vesting of the patronage in a group of local laymen marks a significant stage in the religious affairs of Leeds.

The death of Vicar Fawcett within two years gave the new patrons their opportunity. They chose the Revd Robert Cooke, a distinguished local man, an Oxford graduate and Fellow of Brasenose College. Cooke was a notable patristic scholar and an active preacher who had already won a considerable reputation as a polemicist in the Puritan Protestant interest. Those were the qualities which had commended Robert Cooke to the local patrons, and on his return to Leeds as vicar he set about putting his beliefs into practice. At the parish church, Vicar Cooke soon established a genuine preaching ministry which stimulated a new religious enthusiasm, spreading clear Protestant teachings throughout the parish and influencing his parishioners in various ways. Layfolk were persuaded to make bequests for religious purposes in their wills but now their legacies were not for images or prayers for the dead but for the provision of sermons, or for presents to the clergy, or for local charities to help the poor: for the first time, there is a good deal of evidence of support given to charitable works by the more substantial people in the parish. From the 1590s, therefore, there was in Leeds renewed religious vitality and a re-invigorated church life inspired by Robert Cooke, thanks to the determined intervention of laymen.

III

Until the mid sixteenth century landed gentry exercised a major influence in Leeds, holding extensive property in the parish and its rural hinterland,

⁵ Ralph Thoresby, *Vicaria Leodiensis* (1724), pp. 51-53.

farming the bailiwick of the borough and the important corn mills, and having interests in fulling mills, forges, woodland, market tolls and the perquisites of the manorial courts. Pre-eminent among them were the Nevilles of Hunslet but other neighbouring gentry of county, rather than parish, status, such as the Danbys, Mauleverers and Gascoignes, also had interests in farm land or sporting rights. Although the attainder of Sir John Neville for his part in the Rising of 1569 removed a weighty influence (and gave two of the rising urban families, Cowper and Baynes, with some others the chance to acquire his property), the corn mills, park, fishery and sporting rights of the manor continued in the hands of gentry, some of whom — Hopton, Danby, Skelton — remained prominent among the tithe lessees as well. Moreover, the inherited property of some local parish and neighbouring gentry, such as the Hoptons, Killingbecks, Marshalls, Stables and Skeltons, enabled them to secure influence and office in the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, by the 1550s the position of these older families was increasingly challenged by the newcomers, merchants or merchant-clothiers, who sprang from the same kind of smaller landowners, minor gentry or prosperous yeomanry in the vicinity of Leeds and beyond. Thus, alongside the well-established families we find the newer names: Casson, Ambler, Booth, Cowper, Sykes, Baynes, Simpson, Foxcroft, and Wade.

The prospering and ambitious men strove not only to advance their commercial interests but also to influence, and eventually to organise, various aspects of local life. They began to secure public positions: John Casson became the Duchy of Lancaster's steward, for example, presiding over the court leet; Henry Ambler, and later John Metcalfe and John Harrison, acted as under-bailiffs, farming the bailiwick and collecting its dues. Along with involvement with the trusteeship of the grammar school from the 1550s and the purchase of former chapels at North Bridge End and (later) at the head of Lady Lane for the school's use, 'new men' shared in the tithe leasing and began to take responsibility for local charities. During the 1570s, the influential figures in Leeds tried to follow the national fashion by campaigning for the incorporation of the town and raising money to defray expenses but their attempt was unsuccessful. They also played an important part in the purchase of the advowson; they sported with Wakefield about exemption from market tolls there; they pressed for improvements to the Moot Hall in Kirkgate, overheated and inconvenient as it was because of the adjacent manorial oven; and, in the later 1590s, they fought — ultimately unsuccessfully — against making a contribution to the ship money tax levied on Hull. In 1600, leading men made a further bid to enhance their local position by challenging the under-bailiff about the alleged misappropriation of certain funds intended for charity, an accusation which resulted in an Exchequer Court ruling

whereby the proceeds of the 'toll dish' (the toll levied on corn sales in the market) would in future be split three ways: one-third for the poor; one-third for repairs to roads and the market steads; one-third for the under-bailiff. It proved to be a judgment of some consequence.

By the early seventeenth century, the enterprise and aggressive trading practices of Leeds merchants had aroused complaints from the long-established merchant houses of York and Hull who found themselves being slowly ousted from their dominant position in the cloth export trade. However, Leeds mercantile fortunes depended upon reliable standards of manufacture and steady trade. But in James I's reign, trading fluctuations caused by the activities of royally backed monopolists and the outbreak of continental war gave rise to difficulties. At the same time, there were complaints that abuses in manufacturing by clothiers and dyers posed a growing threat to the business and reputation of Leeds. The slump in trade implied the need for the regulation of textile production, for good workmanship, and for the supervision of both the wool supply and the methods of marketing cloth in order to uphold standards and maintain saleability. That called for a more elaborate framework of local government than that provided by the traditional manorial organisation by which the growing town was still governed, and a similar reflection is prompted by the disputes about the manorial mills. Beginning with prolonged litigation from the 1560s about a privately owned mill on Sheepscar Beck, a series of lawsuits between 1597 and 1619 presented several challenges to the lucrative monopoly long sustained by the manorial corn mills, on the grounds that they were no longer adequate to supply the needs of the growing population.

No doubt realising that Leeds had by then outgrown its manorial institutions and customs, its ambitious merchants and merchant-clothiers pressed for improved facilities with a measure of success. As the expansion of local trade in wool, cloth and other commodities emphasised the importance of market rights, of tolls as a source of income, as well as of toll-free privileges elsewhere, there was pressure to maintain the tolls payable by 'strangers'; and the traders of Leeds secured grants of exemption from tolls at Ripon and Boroughbridge (both wool markets) and throughout the estates of the Duchy of Lancaster. In 1615, to improve conditions for the transaction of public business a new Moot Hall was built in Briggate with better accommodation for the courts and officeholders and with rents, for rooms and shops on the ground floor, as a source of funds for poor relief. Two years later, when Wakefield was named a staple town for the sale of wool, protests from the merchants of Leeds secured its inclusion in the list of authorised wool markets, a privilege which in the event proved short-lived because of legislative changes.

IV

Ferment in the public life of Leeds was paralleled, and influenced, by the changed character of its church life under the vicar, Robert Cooke, assisted by his brother, Alexander. The latter had been deprived of the living of Louth (Lincs.) for his refusal to accept the new Canons of 1604 and for various recognisably Puritan practices, whereupon he had returned to his home area to aid his brother in his ministrations. Alexander Cooke, an Oxford graduate like Robert, was a formidable Puritan scholar and controversialist who wrote a series of vigorous anti-Popish tracts. These two able and determined men did much to spread the opinions and attitudes of enthusiastic Protestantism in the parish, and it is clear that Alexander Cooke's approach and teachings appealed strongly to many of the influential laity in early seventeenth-century Leeds. When Robert Cooke died in 1615, however, a dispute ensued about the method of selecting a successor as vicar. The purchasers of the advowson had not taken steps to perpetuate themselves as a legal entity by formally establishing a trust (though one might have been implied), and the few surviving purchasers led by one Robert Birkhead tried to take advantage of the loophole by seeking to sell the right of presentation for their own financial advantage. Faced with disagreement about the procedure, a group of leading parishioners thwarted Birkhead's ploy by requesting the Archbishop of York (as diocesan) to collate Alexander Cooke to the living until the dispute could be determined in law. The archbishop, Toby Matthew, acceded to the request without obliging Cooke to make the formal subscription usually required. Moreover, Matthew refused to accept the nominee of the surviving purchasers, Richard Middleton, Archdeacon of Cardigan and chaplain to Prince Charles. The subsequent litigation resulted in a Chancery decree in 1617 determining the case in Cooke's favour on the grounds that the original purchase had *implied* a trust and that Birkhead and others had wrongly acted for their own financial benefit. This judgment, therefore, established a self-perpetuating trust to hold the advowson; twenty-five lay trustees, with the power of co-option to fill vacancies, were to choose the vicar, but subject to the approval of a panel (also self-perpetuating) of five local clergymen, at least four of them being of the Puritan persuasion. The lay trustees were men of considerable standing: four were of the county gentry (Sir John Savile, Sir Philip Carey, Sir Arthur Ingram and Christopher Danby, Esq.); four were parish gentry (Thomas Hardwick, Robert Savile, Seth Skelton and William Bainton); and the rest were prominent figures in local affairs, including Richard Sykes, William Marshall, Peter Jackson and Walter Laycock. The establishment of the trust is a further indication of the ability of influential men in the district to undertake corporate action in what they saw as the wider interest. Although the patronage trust did not provide for a popular election of the incumbent, it

did establish the right of nomination by local people of standing, who thereby secured a decisive influence in the choice of their vicar in future, with a minimum of clerical direction.

Secure in his living, Alexander Cooke proved to be a purposeful incumbent. A man of strong convictions, he was a heavy-handed opponent, being a particularly unyielding adversary of his Romanist recusant parishioners; although there were probably fewer than thirty of them, and they plainly presented no great threat to the vicar or the Established Church, he harried them whenever he could. He dealt firmly with offending or neglectful parishioners, denouncing by name from the pulpit those who had misbehaved, and with his churchwardens presenting increasing numbers of backsliders and transgressors at the archiepiscopal visitations. On occasion he preached against the celebration of Christmas and all the accompanying festivities. He attacked unlawful games and drinking in alehouses, especially in service time, and he fulminated against religious ceremonial and some traditional observances. The vicar was well regarded not only as a Protestant controversialist but also as an effective preacher and an exemplary, godly minister. His determination to enforce Puritan godliness in Leeds was not wholly to the liking of some of his congregation, but he clearly enjoyed the support of local men of substance, some of whom had brought about his appointment.

A formidable and controversial figure, Vicar Cooke made enemies, amongst them local notabilities, with one of whom, John Metcalfe (who served as under-bailiff for the actual lessee of the bailiwick, Sir Arthur Ingram), the vicar was at odds over a number of matters. Metcalfe was said to have been a participant in rushbearings and other traditional customs associated with the Church and its festivals. In 1619, he was presented at the archbishop's visitation for absences from church; his plea that official duties had kept him away failed, and he was ordered to attend more regularly and to certify his compliance with the order. About the same time the vicar and others expressed concern over the administration by the under-bailiff of certain public charities, and a commission (which included Cooke) was appointed to investigate the matter. The commission found that although funds for poor relief had been diverted to pay for the new Moot Hall on condition that the rents for rooms and shops there should replenish the poor relief stock, during the previous two years Metcalfe had misappropriated a quarter of the proceeds. It was also discovered that during the previous three years Metcalfe had ignored the provisions of the decree of 1600 about the proceeds of the toll dish by diverting the monies to his own use. Consequently, in 1620 the under-bailiff was ordered to repay the missing sums of money, and a committee of pious uses was appointed, with full powers to manage the charitable funds and to choose its own nominee to act with the under-bailiff in the collection and apportionment of the corn toll. The committee comprised Vicar Cooke

and twelve of the leading inhabitants, among them Samuel Casson, John Harrison, Richard Sykes and Benjamin Wade; it included seven of the parish church trustees. No sooner had this further institution for corporate action been established than the antagonism between the vicar and Metcalfe came to a head when the latter, with one Thomas Jackson, filed a bill of complaint in the Court of Star Chamber, accusing the vicar of defamation. The bill began in the usual way by abusing the defendant, describing Vicar Cooke as a 'factious sectary and Puritan' chosen by a clique against the wishes of the majority. The complainants alleged that Cooke and his friends had composed a doggerel against Metcalfe: it insinuated a charge of immorality, made punning references to calf and bull, defamed his business reputation especially as one of the merchants who had secured the wool staple against the interests of the poor clothiers, accused him of cheating the poor by his maladministration of the toll dish, and charged him with oppressive action by placing market stalls in front of houses. Metcalfe claimed that the vicar had recited these libels at private prayers and even from the pulpit, had slandered him to other merchants, and had stirred up the issue of the charity funds. For good measure, the plaintiffs produced further accusations against Cooke, alleging that his religious opinions and behaviour did not conform to the standards and practice of the Established Church. He was accused of mistreating his critics and opponents, denouncing them by name from the pulpit in strong language, refusing Communion to some parishioners and traditional burial services to others. It was also alleged that the vicar preached against the observance of Christmas and traditional merry-making like rushbearings, and against kneeling for Communion and the use of the ring in marriage; Cooke, it was asserted, in seeking to prevent a recent parish celebration, had been involved in a brawl. Some of these charges were simply a matter of common form, made by plaintiffs to strengthen their case, and the vicar offered answers which mixed denial, explanation, and justification. Standing by his Puritan views (challenging the right of Star Chamber to pronounce on them) he asserted that his supporters in the dispute about the advowson represented the majority view — and that Metcalfe was one of them. He denied authorship of the doggerel, admitted denouncing wayward parishioners but without naming them in public. Cooke claimed justification for his activities in the matter of the funds of the poor and insisted that rushbearings and other festivities had been arranged primarily in order to annoy him; he had intervened only to prevent disorder and had not engaged in brawling, but he did admit to striking a man — his own servant. Perhaps more revealingly, he also admitted that he had carried charged pistols and a dagger for his own protection. Unfortunately, the loss of the court's decrees means that the outcome of the case is not known, but there is no further sign of trouble between the under-bailiff and the vicar, who was not called to defend his opinions or actions before the diocesan court.

Nevertheless, despite the difficulty of evaluating allegation and rebuttal, the case reveals something of the situation in Jacobean Leeds. Between the under-bailiff and the vicar there was obviously personal suspicion and hostility, exacerbated if not engendered by the vicar's part in exposing Metcalfe's misuse of charitable funds. Religious differences and antipathies ran high: Cooke's complaints about disorder in church, ungodly behaviour, and non-attendance at services are supported by verdicts of the diocesan court; there is evidence of anti-clericalism; and although the currency of the defamatory verses suggests popular support for the vicar, his admission of carrying weapons for his own safety tells its own story.

The cross-currents revealed in Metcalfe's case had influenced other local developments. Leeds Parish Church had become a significant focus of corporate activity from the latter part of Elizabeth's reign as well as a setting for local ambitions and rivalries. It is probable that Puritan preachers had stimulated the growth of an urban consciousness, and the remarkable ferment in the public life of Jacobean Leeds continued. In view of the controversies surrounding Bailiff Metcalfe, it is not surprising that in 1622 John Harrison and others made a vain attempt to purchase the lease of the bailiwick. Furthermore, in the same year a royal commission was appointed to investigate the depression in the cloth trade and suggest remedies: the report and subsequent legislation stipulating closer regulation of the cloth industry, its organisation, manufacturing methods and products possibly presented a further stimulus to the activities of prominent Leeds men who were in the front rank of local trade and industry. With their strong desire for more influence in the affairs of Leeds they worked for a more elaborate system of local government than that of the traditional manorial organisation which the town had clearly outgrown, aiming — with eventual success — for a charter of incorporation.

2—Leeds under the First Charter of Incorporation

By 1600, Leeds already had several characteristics of a town. It had a larger and more concentrated population than settlements in the surrounding area with the possible exception of Wakefield. Despite its discrete structure of an in-township and out-townships it had a populous urban nucleus as shown in the sketch map of c. 1560 and the surveys of 1612 and 1628 (Figures 1 and 2), and it had attracted immigrants from the neighbouring districts and beyond. It had a large, if no longer adequate, parish church with chapels-of-ease in the out-townships (some of them admittedly dilapidated), and a grammar school. There was also a market place and a moot hall. If the development of Leeds in the sixteenth century had been partly the consequence of its own industry and trade, its economy was matched by, and interwoven with, the industry and farming of the adjacent area. It was a point of exchange for the hinterland, active in buying and selling, in the organisation and trade required by the West Riding cloth industry, the products of which could be carried into Leeds for finishing and marketing: in short, a lively trading centre for wool and cloth, for foodstuffs and everyday handicraft goods. Social stratification accompanied these developments: local society comprised minor parish gentry landowners, a few lawyers and clergy, merchants and mercers, clothiers and dyers, craftsmen, retailers, labourers in the workshops and the nearby fields. Local prosperity depended on reliable products and steady trade, but during the early seventeenth century trading fluctuations and abuses in manufacturing which lowered the quality of the cloth gave rise to commercial difficulties and ill-feeling. From 1615 a slump in overseas trade pointed to the need for regulation of the wool supply and closer control of cloth manufacture in order to uphold a saleable standard of cloth for the market. Leeds, however, with several manorial jurisdictions in the parish, was not an urban entity. Accordingly, with their ambitions and growing sense of communal authority, encouraged perhaps by the Jacobean campaign for godliness, prominent men worked for a more effective civic constitution, one which would afford greater control over the manufacture of cloth; they pressed for a royal charter.

I

The charter of incorporation for Leeds was confirmed by royal seal on 13 July 1626.¹ Despite the efforts of its moving spirits, among them Sir John

¹ James Wardell, *The Municipal History of the Borough of Leeds* (1846), Appendix p. vii.



FIGURE 2 Leeds in 1612. Professor D. Ward's reconstruction of the written survey of the manor.

From the British Association's *Leeds and Its Region* (1968).

Savile and John Harrison, there had been a delay because of two obstacles, in which Sir Thomas Wentworth, a prominent Yorkshire landowner and Savile's great rival, was involved. One difficulty arose from the attempt to secure inclusion in the charter of the right to return two members to Parliament, a point at issue in the rivalry between the two knights. The other was keen opposition from smaller clothiers who claimed that 'some of the ablest men of Leedes' ignoring the wishes of the majority, had sought incorporation 'for their own ends'; they asked that Wentworth and others should consider and report on 'the conveniency or inconveniency of the said graunt'.² The reasons behind those misgivings are fully reflected in the charter's preamble which establishes the context for the incorporation. The wording shows that it was intended to lead to better local

² Herbert Heaton, *The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries* (Oxford, 1920), p. 222 quoting B(ritish) L(ibrary), Harleian MSS, 1327, p. 9b.

government in Leeds and the advancement of its cloth trade, and that it was to provide constitutional authority for regulations against 'deceptive cloths' and the illegal use of logwood (an inferior dyestuff), both of which were damaging the town's trade and reputation for good workmanship.³

By the charter, the entire parish of Leeds was to be a free borough and a body corporate and politic, with perpetual succession. As a corporate body with its own governing institutions it had the right to acquire, possess and grant property both real and personal; it could plead or be sued in any court; it would have a common seal for the transaction of public business and a legal personality as a 'corporation sole'. The government of the borough was committed to an alderman and a common council of nine principal burgesses and twenty assistants. The alderman and council had executive powers, with specific authority to issue bye-laws and orders affecting the manufacture and dyeing of cloth and the good governance of the inhabitants (artificers being particularly mentioned); offenders were liable to fines or imprisonment. The council's powers could be exercised by majority, but the presence of the alderman was necessary to its meetings. The first alderman and common council were named in the charter, as was the normal practice.⁴

On Michaelmas Day each year (or the day after if 29 September fell on a Sunday), the alderman and council were able to select the next alderman from amongst the principal burgesses; an alderman or other councillor could be removed by the council for misconduct in office. The principal burgesses and assistants held office for life. If there were a vacancy, the common council was to select a new principal burgess from the ranks of the assistants, or a new assistant from the inhabitants at large. Each person so selected was required to take an oath, and anyone refusing office incurred a fine.

Following these arrangements for the common council, the charter included a number of provisions for the administration of the law. The office of recorder was instituted, and a lawyer, John Clayton, was appointed to the post; a deputy could be named, and future recorders were to be chosen by the common council. The alderman, recorder and principal burgesses were to be justices of the peace in the borough, from which the county JPs were excluded. To carry out the orders of the alderman, recorder and principal burgesses two sergeants-at-mace were to be appointed; and, in addition, a coroner and a clerk of the market were to be nominated annually. The common council had the power to appoint constables and other necessary officers and was required to establish a borough prison, to be supervised by the alderman or his deputy.

³ Wardell, Appendix, p. vii.

⁴ See J. W. Kirby, 'Aldermen of Leeds 1626-1700' below.

Finally, it is perhaps not surprising to find that the charter included certain stipulations about the conduct of the local economy. First, the alderman and burgesses were charged with the responsibility for the enforcement of the assize of bread, ale, wine and all kinds of victuals, giving them in effect oversight of food retailers and market dealers. Secondly, the regular weekly market day was switched from Monday to Tuesday to meet the convenience of traders and local customers alike, the tolls and the other fees being appropriated to the common council. Thirdly, the alderman and burgesses were authorised to establish guilds, especially to promote the better regulation of the borough's clothworkers; the common council's permission was required before guild ordinances could be issued.

The royal charter of 1626 was in most respects very typical of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century town charters in general, but some of its provisions call for comment. First, it did not refer to the charter of 1207 or to the existence of any medieval borough. It established a borough constitution for self-government within the entire ecclesiastical parish but the rigid structure laid down was, to some extent, illusory for, within the chartered framework, there remained the possibility for administrative development locally without central interference. Power obviously lay with the alderman and common council (especially the principal burgesses), a self-perpetuating body, the authority of which would be enhanced by any expansion of the administrative machinery. Moreover, manorial rights were not extinguished by the borough charter in the main, although tolls and other market revenues were transferred to the new corporation. The charter was, however, clearly aimed at the control of outsiders and at the establishment of means to regulate the wool supply and cloth trade, including such matters as apprenticeships, manufacturing practices, and standards of workmanship. To a large extent, then, the charter was designed to serve the ambitions of leading townsmen, despite their failure to secure parliamentary representation for the new borough.

With the influential backing at Court of Sir John Savile, the charter had been obtained through the determined efforts of a group of prosperous townsmen who would, inevitably, play a leading part in the affairs of the newly incorporated borough, whether as principal burgesses or assistants. Their origins were various: some were descendants of the enterprising mid-Tudor elite who, as members of the grammar school trust of 1552, established a visible corporate identity; others came from less prominent families who rose in the world during the last quarter of the sixteenth century; a few represented well-established yeomanry risen into the ranks of the parish gentry, with property in the neighbouring countryside; a small number of incomers from Wharfedale, Airedale or Calderdale provided an infusion of new blood and a dynamic approach.

Thirty men were named as the first corporators in the charter. The nominated alderman, Sir John Savile, held the office for only a few weeks,

discharging his duties through his deputy (John Harrison) but remaining nominally a principal burgess until 1630. Nine other men were named as principal burgesses originally, and three more served in that capacity before the Civil War, having been promoted from assistantships to fill vacancies. Two of those twelve, Ralph Hopton and Seth Skelton, were parish gentry; three were lawyers, Robert Benson, Samuel Casson and John Hodgson, all with local roots; the remaining seven, John Harrison, Richard Sykes, Thomas Metcalfe, Joseph Hillary and the former assistants Benjamin Wade, Francis Jackson, and Ralph Croft were all merchants. Amongst the twenty original assistants, there were, in addition to the three who were promoted, at least eight merchants or mercers; trading interests were in a dominating position in the common council. Marriage ties were clearly important, especially as the mercantile families preferred to marry within their own ranks. Some owned modest landed properties, others, notably Sykes and Harrison, possessed extensive urban holdings. Finally, the overlapping membership of various bodies established clear evidence for the elite of early seventeenth-century Leeds: seven of the original trustees for the advowson of the parish church were members of the first committee of pious uses; seven trustees for the advowson, including Savile, were nominated to the first common council, three principal burgesses and four assistants.

Above all, eight of the thirteen members of the first committee of pious uses were among the first incorporators, five of them principal burgesses, and four more principal burgesses were co-opted to that committee, making twelve incorporators in all. The first common council of the borough was thus at once involved with both the administration of charitable funds and the ministry at the parish church.

II

The absence of the administrative and financial records of the corporation before 1662 makes it impossible to present a detailed account of its work. Thus, although it is known that in 1626 there was an argument about the town's liability to contribute to Hull's assessment for ship money on the grounds that local inland merchants benefited, as did coastal towns, from naval protection against pirates — the controversy had arisen in the 1590s — no evidence of the common council's actions has survived. The controversy was renewed in 1635 when Leeds, whose merchants (it was argued) used both the port facilities and the shipping of Hull, tried apparently without success to avoid paying a ship money assessment of £200; of that dispute too there are no details. Similarly, outbreaks of plague and other epidemics occurred in the West Riding and other parts of Yorkshire

during the 1630s, and the parish registers of Leeds show unusually large numbers of burials in the years 1635–37 and 1640, but there are no indications of precautionary measures (of the kind taken in York or Hull) adopted by the town's rulers.

Fortunately, other events are better documented, notably the acquisition of the manor and the common council's attempt to establish guilds. In 1627–28, under the terms of the Great Contract, a scheme for the repayment of royal debts, the corporation of London obtained, along with other properties of the honour of Pontefract, the unexpired lease of the manor of Leeds, the reversion of which it subsequently purchased.⁵ Arrangements for the re-sale of the property were soon made, and the financial transaction resulted in the lease being assigned to Richard Sykes and eight associates; at the same time, the reversion was conveyed to another group of Leeds townsmen for an annual reserved fee farm rent of £58 15s. 2d. ½f. Sykes himself first met the cost of the purchase — £2710 8s. 10¼d. — bringing his son William and seven of the common council (John Harrison, Samuel Casson, Thomas Metcalfe, Joseph Hillary, Benjamin Wade, Francis Jackson and William Marshall) into partnership as the nine joint lords of the manor. The transaction excluded the manorial corn mills and fulling mill, the park, and certain other rights but it included the markets and fairs, the common oven and the bailiwick. The importance of this purchase lay partly in the fact that the manor had jurisdiction over some 80 per cent of the property in the town and therefore could have some influence on the activities of the inhabitants. One significant move came as early as 1630 when the joint lords began the enfranchisement of copyhold land in return for a substantial fine, thus converting much of the manorial property to freehold. Moreover, although at first the seigneurial rights and profits, held in nine parts, rested in private hands, the deal facilitated their eventual transfer to the corporation, a process which began in 1655 when, thanks to John Harrison, five-ninths of the proceeds of the bailiwick were conveyed (in return for a payment) to trustees for the use of the town council.

The argument against incorporation which preceded the charter was continued in exacerbated form by the establishment of guilds, and this proved to be the substance of a long-lasting dispute between the corporation and the wider body of clothworkers and other craftsmen. Fresh controversy was provoked in 1629 by the decision of the common council to compose a borough custumal, a regulatory framework for local industry and commerce. A lengthy document, it comprised twenty-seven ordinances directed towards the establishment of a class of freemen, detailed

⁵: For the relevant documents see Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, 155–208; Beresford, *NH*, X, 126–40; full details are given in the biographical notes on pp.57, 67.

rules for apprenticeships, and procedures for orderly government in general. In future, apprentices were to be admitted by the alderman and principal burgesses; indentures would be drawn up by the town clerk who would keep a register of enrolments; apprentices would serve for seven years; masters could only recruit new apprentices at fixed intervals and were liable to a fine for attracting an apprentice away from another master. Journeymen were required to provide proof of their qualifications and to give due notice to a master before departure. The status of freeman could be acquired by apprenticeship service, patrimony or redemption [i.e. purchase], on payment of a fee; no unfree craftsmen or traders were to practise an occupation or take apprentices; and no unfree person was to be employed by a freeman without a licence from the alderman and two JPs. In addition to these detailed rules for freemen-masters and others in trade and industry, there were ordinances of wider application: fines would be levied for failure to obey council orders, and inhabitants were required to report offenders; freemen and other townspeople were required to pay all reasonable charges and assessments; refusal of any office would incur a fine; the sergeants-at-mace would collect fines (or the proceeds of distress and sale from non-payers) on behalf of the town's chamberlain, the sums received being divided, half for the corporation and half for the poor; the ordinances were to be read from time to time in the Moot Hall, in order to make the inhabitants aware of their contents. Finally, in a clause which emphasised the essential purpose of the custumal, there was provision for amended or additional ordinances to remedy any further abuses in making, dressing, or dyeing cloth, or in any other craft or trade, which might be discovered subsequently.

About the same time it seems that tailors, shoemakers and other 'mechanics' were being forced into guilds, a move they were trying to resist, but it was the common council's scheme for a guild of clothworkers which aroused vociferous opposition. Robert Simpson, Christopher Jackson and large numbers (allegedly thousands) of poor Leeds clothiers petitioned the King, urging him to refer the issue to peers and gentry of the county, men who understood the cloth industry; the petitioners insisted that the charter of 1626 did not give the corporation the power to compel clothiers and others to join a guild but left the decision to the craftsmen themselves; they also asserted that the proposed guild was for the benefit of the alderman and principal burgesses, not for the good of the industry. The corporation's counter-petition insisted that the proposed clothworkers' guild was intended to promote good workmanship and prevent deceitful manufacturing methods. After consideration by the Council in the North, the guild was established and, along with the custumal, its ordinances received the requisite judicial approval in 1630. The guild was to be governed by two masters, one chamberlain, six wardens and twenty assistants, together with a paid beadle and clerk; all these first officeholders

were named as were the first freemen of the company (105 in number). Rules were laid down for oath-taking, length of service in office, and elections. The arrangements for apprenticeships followed those of the custumal, as did many of those for freemen of the company, with a greater emphasis on discipline: freemen could be fined for refusing office, absence from guild meetings, and disobeying the orders of officers, the fines being shared between the corporation and the guild. A subscription was required of the company's members to build up a fund for meeting the costs of defending its rights and privileges. The policing role of the guild, a matter of central concern to the town's merchants, was emphasised in ordinances which stipulated that the cloth-finishing processes were only to be carried out by freemen clothworkers, that no cloth should be accepted for dressing from non-freemen, and that clothworkers should not send cloth out of Leeds for dressing elsewhere. Although the common council agreed that it would introduce further orders concerning the manufacture of cloth only with the consent of the major part of the company's officeholders, any new ordinances desired by the company would require the approval of the alderman and council who would assist the guild in the enforcement of its rules. That degree of supervision accorded closely with the reinforcement across the country of guild regulations in response to the economic difficulties of the period and reflected the determination of the town's councillors to be involved in the control of the local industry.

III

The absence of official records makes it impossible to say whether the corporation was involved (like the governing bodies of York and Hull, for example) in the encouragement of godliness, but Leeds had been strongly influenced by the Puritan teaching of the vicar, Alexander Cooke, at the parish church, and charitable giving by local gentry and prosperous townsmen had increased, with more bequests and larger sums being left for the maintenance of preachers, especially for the lecturer at the parish church. In different ways, the out-townships benefited from local philanthropy, for between 1622 and 1632 five chapels-of-ease were either built or re-built: Headingley, Armley, Hunslet, Bramley and Holbeck. For the most part, the curates appointed were graduates and preachers who benefited from legacies, and by the early 1630s there were probably a dozen clergy ministering to the people of Leeds. Following the death of Vicar Cooke, Henry Robinson became the incumbent in 1632. The son of a local merchant and nephew of John Harrison, he was a Cambridge graduate, a fine preacher, a moderate Puritan, and a defender of the Prayer Book. During the 1630s, therefore, there was a notable flowering of moderate

Puritan piety and enthusiasm. The churchwardens showed vigour in presenting individuals who had committed religious offences to the Church courts: parishioners who misbehaved in church; moral offenders; idlers drinking in alehouses instead of working; Sabbath breakers; absentees in service time. The attempt to restrain and punish these faults was one aspect of the religious zeal of the period. Another was the response of the clergy and churchwardens to the Archbishop of York's campaign to ensure compliance with the Prayer Book, bringing pressure to bear on clergy — especially the Puritan curates in the chapelries — and churchwardens to adhere to the prescribed ceremonies and forms of service. Not all of Vicar Robinson's subordinates were as compliant as he was; however, no action was taken against the conduct of his ministry, he was never brought before the Church courts, and after the visitation of 1633 he and his churchwardens responded quickly to Archbishop Neile's orders to tidy up and 'beautify' the interior of the parish church and protect the altar and chancel against desecration.

The most important development was the building of St John's church, which was founded by John Harrison, a wealthy merchant, a philanthropist, and a principal burgess. The church was intended to provide badly needed, additional accommodation for services in the crowded town centre but Harrison only managed to establish St John's after overcoming misgivings on the part of the archbishop, Richard Neile. The latter wished to ensure that the endowment for the minister's stipend and the repair fund would be adequate, he was perturbed by the obvious danger of rival pulpits when he discovered how near the new church was to the parish church, and he was against Harrison's proposal for the nomination of the minister to be made by ten members of the corporation, a method which smacked of popular election. After some delay a compromise was reached, whereby the minister would be subordinate to the vicar of Leeds who would join the alderman and three burgesses in the appointment of the clergy. Robert Todd, the Puritan vicar of Ledsham and lecturer at Leeds Parish Church, was duly appointed and St John's was consecrated in 1634. The traditional story of the suspension of Todd after a controversy with Archdeacon John Cosin on the day of the ceremony is not supported by the ecclesiastical records but Harrison, because of his family connection with Vicar Robinson, cannot have been unaware of Todd's reputation as an unbending Puritan.

St John's is a notable church: built in the late Gothic style; designed for Prayer Book worship, with its large chancel for Communion and screened from the double nave with its prominent pulpit, thus emphasising both sacrament and sermon; and with sumptuously carved woodwork, much of the decoration of pews, screen and ceiling being distinctly secular in tone.

It symbolised the varied religious standpoints of the 1630s: Puritan, Laudian traditionalism, reforming Prayer Book moderation. For Harrison,

St John's marked the culmination of some thirty years of philanthropy, beginning with gifts of property for the poor; a market cross in Briggate; service on the committee of pious uses; the new building for the grammar school; the building and endowment of almshouses for forty inmates, with a chapel. The gift to Leeds of a new church seems to have stimulated the generosity of other wealthy townspeople. St John's itself received bequests to buy church plate and to augment the stipend of the minister and an assistant. Other financial benefactions were made for the relief of the poor or to provide other services; of the latter the workhouse, established by Richard Sykes and other members of the common council, was the most notable and gave the town another public building in 1638.

IV

By the late 1630s the controversy about the creation of guilds appears to have died down; guilds existed in the town but nothing is known of their activities or effectiveness. However, the clothiers of Leeds had another grievance against which they launched a protest, namely aspects of the legislation on apprentices. They objected to property qualifications for those wishing to take apprentices and to the requirements for masters to employ a journeyman with every three apprentices. They also complained about the damage clothiers would suffer if prosecuted for breaches of the law, asked that they be allowed to purchase wool direct from wool producers rather than through middlemen, and requested that all these matters should be considered locally by the JPs and the Council in the North. The outcome of these pleas is not known, but it may not be entirely coincidental that about the same time the common council of Leeds had submitted to the Privy Council a petition of its own. Pointing to the value of customs duties derived from the export of Leeds cloth, as well as the numbers employed and the growth of trade since incorporation, the town council argued that because cloth towns elsewhere in the country enjoyed parliamentary representation, laws had been passed which were prejudicial to the cloth industry of the Leeds area. Moreover, it claimed that the imperfections in the charter of 1626 prevented the reform of all the abuses in the manufacturing of cloth. Consequently, they sought parliamentary representation, to enable the local cloth interest to be upheld in the House of Commons, and they asked for wider powers to reform industrial abuses in the form of a new charter vesting the town's government in a mayor, twelve aldermen and twelve burgesses. The timing of these petitions proved unfortunate: they were overtaken by political and military events.

3—Leeds in the Civil War and Interregnum

During the Civil War, Leeds was not a main stronghold for either side. Unlike York, Hull, Scarborough or Pontefract it lacked a castle or long-standing fortifications, but it was involved in important preliminaries, political as well as military, it was the scene of sporadic fighting and of one pitched battle. During the earlier years of the war it served as an informal military base and the key to control of the western part of the West Riding, for it had a certain economic and strategic importance: Leeds was crucial to the finishing processes of West Riding cloth, for which the town along with Wakefield were principal markets; Wakefield was on the route to London, but Leeds lay athwart the roads to York and Chester and to Hull; its position provided access to the all-important food producing areas of the Vale and Plain of York.

I

Yorkshire as a whole was much involved in the events leading up to the outbreak of war. The royal court moved to York early in 1642, and the city became a focal point for the mounting quarrel between King and Parliament; adherents of both sides tried to rally support and raise troops in the Yorkshire countryside during the summer of 1642. Towards the end of August, a meeting of Parliamentary gentry sympathisers held in Otley promised to maintain the peace, but protested against promises made by other gentry of men and cash for the King. On 19 September, a group of Parliamentary gentry met in Leeds to acclaim Ferdinando, Lord Fairfax (who had a house at Denton in Wharfedale) as commander-in-chief of Parliament's forces in Yorkshire, a choice which had parliamentary approval. Fairfax's men were active in and around Leeds, watched or harried by Royalist horsemen. In late September, there was an important gathering of a dozen prominent gentry, half of them Royalists, half Parliamentary, at Rothwell; all men of substance, their lead was potentially influential. They arranged a truce, followed by a neutrality treaty under which they promised to disband all military forces and raise no more, to keep out of the county troops from elsewhere, and to uphold 'general amity'. That Treaty of Rothwell had a certain significance: it represented the views of good neighbours and local patriots eager to protect their homes and families from danger; it revealed a reluctance to push matters to a fight; and it suggested the absence of any rising tide of political and

religious enmity. (There were similar treaties elsewhere, in Lancashire, Cheshire, Devon and Cornwall, for example.). Nevertheless, 'neutrality' did not last. It was condemned by Parliament and rejected in other parts of Yorkshire; it aroused the fury of Sir John Hotham and his son, Captain John Hotham, who were holding Hull for Parliament but were jealous of the influence of Lord Fairfax and his son, Sir Thomas. The Hothams therefore lost little time in breaking the truce, within three weeks Royalist troops were attacking Parliamentary detachments in the Bradford area, and there was sporadic fighting elsewhere.

In the absence of local records it is difficult to identify reasons for the choice of sides in the looming conflict. For some, political or constitutional issues were the deciding factors, for others, religious standpoints provided the essential motive: many Puritans, for example, believed that in opposing the royal government's policy in Church affairs they were doing 'the Lord's work'. Moreover, by 1642 popular grievances in the West Riding against Charles I's regime had grown: continuing depression in the cloth trade was causing hardship; clothiers protested about interference with manufacturing processes and about inspections and financial impositions; stocks of finished cloth could not be sold; there were unhappy memories of the quartering of English troops during the Bishops' Wars of 1639-41, in addition to the alarm caused when the Scottish army was encamped near Ripon. In Leeds, with its recent royal charter, many of the merchants and wealthier clothiers, and thus many of the governing body, favoured the King's side but it is clear that there was strong support for the Parliamentarians. Local allegiances frequently depended upon which side was militarily dominant in a district, but during the autumn of 1642 neither of the contestants was able to establish control over the West Riding. Neither the Royalists nor the Parliamentarians found it easy to raise men, dependent as they were on the remnants of the trained bands, volunteers, tenants and private companies recruited by wealthy gentry. The nature of recruitment meant the reluctance of men to move from their home areas: hence the 'localisation' of conflict and the ever-present threat of desertions. Shortage of money for pay enhanced the attraction of plunder, and both sides complained of the lack of arms and ammunition, to remedy which they fell back on improvised weapons and untrained men.

During the early weeks of the war, the Parliamentarians had their main base at Hull, the Royalists at York; elsewhere in Yorkshire military presence shifted, dependent on the allegiance of local gentry and success in raising troops. In the West Riding, Parliamentary forces pivoted on Tadcaster and Selby in an attempt to keep open the communications between Hull and the textile districts, notably Leeds, Wakefield and Halifax, a source of men, money and support. Much of the campaigning from autumn 1642 to the summer of 1643 was, therefore, determined by rivalry for control of the cloth towns and the farming area to the east.

II

From the outset the Parliamentarians had only a loose hold on the Leeds district and were dependent on the strong local influence of the Fairfaxes. Indeed, for a very brief period after the breakdown of the neutrality treaty Royalist troops were in Leeds but were forced out in October 1642 by a small force of the Fairfaxes' men who were able to add to their number and raise funds in the town. They held the Royalists at bay for some time, but in December 1642 the Marquis of Newcastle arrived in Yorkshire with a force 8000 to 9000 strong to take command of the Royalist army. Having secured the river crossings at Tadcaster and Wetherby, Newcastle's troops pushed further into the West Riding, and despite local support for the Parliamentarians, the common council surrendered Leeds to a force commanded by Sir William Savile. During the ensuing weeks, Leeds was the base for Royalist operations against Bradford and other places beyond, but Savile was unable to take Bradford which therefore served as Sir Thomas Fairfax's headquarters for a counter-attack on Leeds in January 1643.

The 'battle' of Leeds was one of those 'sharp skirmishes' of which Clarendon wrote in his celebrated *History of the Rebellion*. During the weeks which preceded it, Savile had been able to make preparations for the defence of the town. The garrison comprised some 1500 men with five troops of horse and dragoons; there were two demi-culverins, a type of cannon; the entries to Briggate and the Headrow were barricaded; a wide trench about six feet deep with a breastwork for musketeers ran from near Lady Lane, round the north side of St John's church, across the Headrow, southwards along the west side of the town and across Boar Lane and Swinegate to the Aire, with an inner trench between Swinegate and the river; two breastworks, or sconces, were raised at the north end of the bridge, and there was another on the south side of the river, at the head of Hunslet Lane; the eastern approach to the town seems to have been only lightly defended. Meanwhile, in planning his attack on Leeds, to be launched on 23 January 1643, Sir Thomas Fairfax assembled a force of 1200 to 1300 men in the Bradford area, including six troops of horse, three companies of dragoons and some 600 musketeers; there were also a 1000 or more 'clubmen', untrained and ill-equipped volunteers.¹

Having moved into the Aire valley, Fairfax then divided his troops, sending a detachment of dragoons, musketeers and clubmen under Captain Henry Mildmay to march along the south bank of the river towards Hunslet Moor, thence to attack the Royalist positions at the bridgehead;

¹ For the latest discussion of the motives and activities of clubmen, see A. J. Hopper, 'The Clubmen of the West Riding of Yorkshire during the First Civil War', *NH*, XXXVI (2000), 59–72.

the larger part of the force made its way to Woodhouse Moor. Savile refused Fairfax's summons to surrender and, in the early afternoon, the Parliamentary attack, with the watchword 'Emmanuel', was launched in the teeth of a blizzard. Troops covered by cavalry assaulted the defensive trench near St John's church, and a larger force under Captain Forbes moved southwards towards the river, coming under fire from the defenders behind the trench, which remained unbreached. In Hunslet, however, the Parliamentarians had more success: the ferocity of their fire dislodged the Royalists from the breastworks south of the river, forcing them back over the bridge where for a time they were able to hold the attackers. From their new vantage points on the river bank, Mildmay's men began to fire on the defenders within the double trenches across the river and at the sconces at the north end of the bridge. The Royalists suffered heavily from this attack which seems to have caused surprise, if not panic, in their ranks and led them to abandon the trenches. That gave Forbes and his men the chance to overrun the abandoned works and — encouraged by a minister who sang the 68th Psalm, 'Let God arise and then His enemies shall be scattered' — to break into the lower town. About the same time, despite the Royalists' use of cannon, the attackers succeeded in driving them from the sconces at the bridge, forcing them to withdraw from their defensive positions and into Briggate. At the north end of the town Fairfax's troops had breached the trench near St John's and had advanced into the Headrow, pushing Savile's men into the upper end of Briggate; that whole street was for a time the scene of bitter fighting between the two sides. The Royalists, however, began to lose heart, some throwing away their arms, and Savile found he was unable to rally them. In the ensuing flight some were drowned but Savile, Henry Robinson, vicar of Leeds, and others were carried across the Aire on horseback to the comparative safety of Methley, leaving Fairfax in control of the town. Despite some ferocious fighting contemporaries did not record heavy loss of life although the numbers of casualties given vary: possibly a dozen Parliamentarians and about thirty Royalists. The Parliamentarians captured about 460 men together with precious arms and ammunition, including barrels of gunpowder, two demi-culverins, and a large quantity of match and muskets.

The battle for Leeds represented a bold stroke by Fairfax, whose force was less well organised than that of the Royalists. He used mobility and surprise to good effect, concentrating the main attack on the defences near the river and allowing the momentum of the onslaught to overwhelm the defenders once a breach had been made in the defences. Detailed accounts reveal some amateurish touches in the fighting, as well as inaccurate firing and inefficient communications. The Royalists did not make effective use of the cannon; the bridge and the southern approach to it were not

adequately defended; alarm and flight quickly set in after surprise reverses and confusion. Moreover, there was no wish on either side for a bitter fight to the death, another frequent characteristic of the hostilities during the earlier years of the Civil War.

The involvement of Leeds in that war did not end in January 1643, although the fall of the town prompted so much alarm among Royalists that they withdrew from the West Riding and fell back on York. For their part, the Parliamentarians kept a garrison in Leeds which was used as the base for their military operations in the central West Riding. In March 1643, Newcastle's troops returned to the area, relying on superiority in manpower and supplies to enable them to put pressure on the Fairfaxes and edge them westwards again. At the end of the month, the Parliamentarians suffered a defeat on Seacroft Moor and were forced to fight their way back to Leeds. Having considered and rejected the idea of an assault on the town, the Royalists decided to attempt a siege but they were too few in number to establish an encirclement and, after an abortive attempt at a treaty, Newcastle withdrew his forces to Wakefield. The presence of Royalist troops there posed a threat to Fairfax's position in Leeds and the surrounding area; provisions were scarce, the military presence was unpopular, the men themselves were becoming mutinous. In desperation, therefore, Lord Fairfax detached men from the garrison at Leeds and other localities, and on 21 May, successfully attacked the Royalists in Wakefield, capturing the town. The advantages of the victory were short-lived. Although Newcastle's forces withdrew from the area for a time, later in June they advanced again; Fairfax, with many of his Leeds garrison in the vanguard, confronted Newcastle's army at Adwalton Moor (between Wakefield and Bradford) on 30 June but suffered a heavy defeat. Consequently, the Fairfaxes were obliged to abandon Leeds, Bradford and the textile district, withdrawing their depleted forces — not without difficulty — to the Parliamentary stronghold at Hull. It is said that in the chaos caused by the collapse of the Parliamentary position Royalist prisoners held in Leeds broke out of custody and seized control of the town until Newcastle stationed a small garrison there to maintain control over that area of the West Riding, which remained quiet for the rest of the year. The arrival of the Scottish army in January 1644 to assist the Parliamentary cause in Yorkshire led to the redeployment of Royalist forces commanded by John, Lord Bellasis, who chose Leeds as his headquarters. There was some desultory fighting, including a raid on Hunslet, and in April 1644 Sir Thomas Fairfax regained Leeds, a step in the redrawing of military lines in the campaign of large armies which led to the Parliamentarians' victory at Marston Moor, their dominance in Yorkshire, and the installation of a Parliamentary military governor in Leeds until the end of the war.

III

The experience of Leeds during the military campaigns exhibits certain characteristics of the English Civil Wars. It shows how local garrisons used moderately-sized towns as strongpoints, bases, refuges, the means of control over a wider area, and a source of fighting men and supplies. It demonstrates what could be gained by assaults, raids and skirmishes in the absence of fixed lines of campaigning, and it suggests the uncertainties and difficulties resulting from changes of control. Even with the amateurish touches and limited casualties the military exchanges were serious in intent and clear in objective. Moreover, Leeds had an important role in the sequence of military events, giving the town a recognised regional significance.

The impact on the town of the fighting — albeit intermittent — and the changes of control was inevitably serious. The presence of troops raised the problem of the provision of billets, always an unpopular matter, and the availability of adequate food supplies. Military demands, imposed by both sides, for money, food and fodder resulted in shortfalls in tithe and rent payments. There was loss of life and damage to property — to judge from later complaints, some of it extensive. There were allegations of looting, deliberate vandalism, and threatening behaviour. The craftsmen-clothiers complained bitterly of poverty caused by interruptions to trade. Under parliamentary ordinances supporters of the King's cause were liable to punishment for their 'delinquency': their property was sequestered, and they were obliged to compound for its restitution, that is, to pay a fine levied in proportion to the property's value. At least thirty Leeds men were subjected to these penalties when found guilty of joining, or collaborating with, the Royalists; in many cases their contributions or other involvement had been minimal, and the delinquents included textile craftsmen — a dyer, and a yeoman with a tenter yard, for example — as well as parish gentry, prominent and wealthy townsmen. Among the latter were men who had served as aldermen: Thomas Metcalfe (fined £120), Joseph Hillary (£140), Robert Benson, who was fined £200 but was, in effect, ruined because of his Royalist activities. One of the main sufferers was John Harrison, who claimed to have given help only under pressure — and that to both sides — and became involved in lengthy legal proceedings to protect his property; but (despite the intervention of influential friends and a complaisant Parliamentarian, Martin Isles, a future alderman) he was heavily penalised with a fine of £464 18s. 2d.²

². See below, *Aldermen of Leeds*, 1626 onwards and especially the biographical material on Harrison.

Before the people of Leeds had recovered from the consequences of local warfare they faced a further threat to their lives and well-being: plague. The outbreak began in March 1645, and the disease raged through the summer and autumn.³ The epidemic was particularly virulent in lower-lying parts of the town: the Calls, the lower end of Briggate, Mill Hill, but many victims were from the Vicar Lane area. Local life was seriously disrupted. In an attempt to arrest the spread of infection, precautions similar to those taken in other towns were adopted. The parish church was closed; the market in Briggate was suspended; pest houses were constructed on Quarry Hill, and those suspected of being infected were moved there; household goods and clothes were burnt and houses cleansed; the movement of clothiers, dealers and other travellers into or out of Leeds was restricted. Confusion and gaps in the burial register reflect the disturbance caused by the plague, but between 11 March and 25 December 1645 more than 1325 people died as a result of the visitation, approximately one fifth of the population. The peak of deaths was reached in the last week of July; the heaviest monthly death toll was in August; and nine-tenths of the fatalities occurred from June to October. Apart from the churchyards, other, informal, burial places had to be used. Many of the town's notables moved into the country, and the plague stricken included large numbers of the 'poorer sort'. The effectiveness of the precautions is impossible to measure, but, to help the suffering inhabitants, the West Riding JPs raised funds for relief, and considerable sums were distributed before the epidemic subsided with the approach of cooler weather towards the end of the year.

The severity of the plague posed particularly difficult problems for local officeholders, whose position in 1645 was far from certain. On the eve of the Civil War the corporation had attempted to secure a new charter, strengthening its powers and establishing parliamentary representation; the proposal had been accepted, it was subsequently alleged, in 1642 when Charles I was at Nottingham, but the outbreak of hostilities had prevented the confirmation and issue of the new charter. The original incorporation of 1626 therefore endured until its authority was undermined by military activity, individual defections, and the eventual control of a Parliamentary military governor. In 1646, apparently with the assistance of Colonel Charles Fairfax, the borough constitution was fully restored, and new council members were named to fill vacancies caused by death, or dismissal for Royalist involvement; none of the pre-war principal burgesses remained in office after the Civil War, but at least two pre-war assistants, William Marshall, the elder, and William Stable continued on the common council, probably as principal burgesses. Among the first of that rank to

³ For a general study of plague, drawing on much local evidence, see J. F. D. Shrewsbury, *A History of Bubonic Plague in the British Isles* (Cambridge, 1970).

serve as alderman were three men who were sufficiently prominent in local Parliamentary circles to be appointed sequestrators of delinquents' estates, John Dawson, Francis Allanson and John Thoresby, and it is clear that those who became principal burgesses after the collapse of the royal cause were men of the same stamp as their predecessors.⁴ Very little is known of the work of the corporation during the later 1640s, but it is significant that, as early as 1647, the thorny issue of regulations in the cloth industry to improve the standard of workmanship had arisen again. The system of inspection had broken down during the hostilities but the common council of Leeds was determined that it should be resumed. Accordingly, the alderman and burgesses complained to the West Riding JPs about the state of the cloth trade and widespread abuses in the making of cloth, securing from the bench a promise of co-operation with the searchers from Leeds in the detection of offenders. Failure to honour that undertaking aroused more resentment amongst the town's clothworkers, seeing themselves as harassed by regulations which others in the wider area of the West Riding could escape, a continuing source of contention and ill-will.

IV

The political breakdown and warfare had far-reaching effects on church life. Legislation to disestablish the Church of England, ban its liturgy, and abolish its organisation exacerbated the religious divisions which had developed during the preceding decades and led, in Leeds as elsewhere, to confusion and collapse. The vicar of Leeds, Henry Robinson, was ejected from his living because of Royalist sympathies,⁵ and for some time the parish church was closed until the admission of Peter Saxton as vicar in 1646. Saxton was a Hebraist and an influential preacher who had ministered in the notoriously Puritan colony of Massachusetts. At Leeds, he encouraged such Puritan practices as the repetition of sermons after services, and he was responsible for the introduction of the newly prescribed service book, the Presbyterian *Directory of Public Worship*; he placed renewed emphasis on godliness, observance of the Sabbath, and religious exercises public and private, as well as discouraging traditional festivities and popular pursuits. In the absence of ecclesiastical court records, it is impossible to be sure how far the regulations were enforced, and the same applies to the proposals of the national Committee for Plundered Ministers

⁴ See below *Aldermen of Leeds*.

⁵ Vicar Robinson served as rector of Swillington from 1649 to 1663, having suffered heavy losses in his personal estate.

to augment, from either sequestered tithe income or another benefice, the stipends of the ministers at the parish church, St John's and the chapelries. There was also a scheme, apparently not carried out, to establish a parish for St John's and to create other new parishes by the amalgamation of chapelries (Headingley with Chapel Allerton, for example). Following Saxton's death in 1651, parochial tensions came to the surface in the contest over the succession between three candidates, a Presbyterian, an old Royalist Established Churchman, and an apparent Independent. In the event, the supporters of the last mentioned won the day by the appointment of William Styles, a moderate Puritan ejected as incumbent of Hessele and Hull for refusing to take the Engagement to the Commonwealth.

Meantime the familiar Puritan ministrations continued at St John's under Robert Todd who organised his church on a Presbyterian basis, was associated with other Presbyterian clergy in the neighbourhood of Leeds, including Adel, and subscribed to the Engagement very unwillingly. In the chapelries, ministers of various standpoints officiated; one of the them, Christopher Ness, was also lecturer at the parish church; some were graduates; some, including the ministers at Armley and Beeston, had not been ordained. Moreover, during the 1650s various sects emerged in different parts of the parish with a variety of beliefs. Todd wished to dominate the religious life of Leeds, preaching counter to the sermons of Styles and apparently being implicated in a plan to replace him: the danger of rival pulpits, as foreseen by Archbishop Neile in the 1630s, had come to pass. Although Todd had influential supporters in the corporation, he gave offence by his lukewarm support for the Cromwellian Protectorate as well as by his unbending Sabbatarianism, which was opposed by the clothiers, who insisted on their need to work on Sundays. His determined Presbyterian stance and that of his son-in-law, John Garnet, the aggressive master of the grammar school, provoked serious discord with their patron and benefactor, John Harrison, casting a shadow over his declining years.

Meanwhile, in a challenge to both Vicar Styles and Todd, George Fox and his early Quaker adherents had been active, one of the first being William Dewsbury, a weaver and preacher associated with Fox's meetings; their teachings resulted in a number of conversions in the district. Those early Quakers were by no means peaceable and inoffensive. There are recorded instances in which 'people called Quakers' (as they were frequently styled) faced prosecution and punishment for blasphemy, travelling on Sundays, refusing to take oaths, absence from church, or disturbing ministers and congregations gathered for public worship. On one occasion, in 1658, a Quaker was roughly handled at the parish church for trying to preach after Vicar Styles had finished his sermon. Not surprisingly, in the following year, ministers in Leeds joined others in Bradford and Halifax in a petition to Protector Richard Cromwell, asking the authorities to suppress Quaker disturbances, another sign of the unsettled times.

V

Religious differences were only one aspect of the discord which characterised much of public life during the 1650s. War, first at home, then against the Dutch, depressed trade, and piracy added to the legacy of difficulties experienced by the cloth industry during the preceding decade, emphasizing again the problem of faulty workmanship and measures to combat it. In the continuing clash between the interests of the merchants and those of the clothiers, the former were determined to regulate the industry by using (and strengthening) the powers of the corporation, the latter were wary of new restrictions, especially if they were not applicable in the surrounding area. Faced with the failure of the West Riding JPs to enforce statutory provisions, they favoured as the solution the creation of a West Riding broadcloth company, governed independently of the corporation by JPs, and other officers chosen by the clothworkers themselves, but the rural clothiers refused to co-operate and the scheme collapsed. A revision of the charter became the next best objective, in pursuit of which merchants and clothiers turned for assistance in 1654 to Captain Adam Baynes, the newly elected MP for Leeds under the Instrument of Government, which enfranchised Leeds and Halifax for the first time.⁶ Baynes, a member of a parish gentry family with property at Knostrop, had dabbled in the land market and financial speculation; he was General John Lambert's 'man of business'; imbued with political and religious radicalism, he was an unbending republican and an Independent. The election of Baynes sparked off further controversy which continued after his re-election to the Cromwellian Parliament of 1656. Although he seems at first to have worked for reconciliation, his sympathy for the complaints of the clothworkers — in which he had the support of some Independents in the common council and Vicar Styles — brought him into conflict with the leading Presbyterian corporators, among them Francis Allanson, and Martin Iles, as well as with Robert Todd, the latter aggrieved by his opposition to Sabbatarian rules.

In December 1656, a petition allegedly with nearly 700 signatures, went from Leeds to the Protector and council; carefully worded and claiming to represent merchants as well as clothiers, it referred to the grievances of the latter, asked for a new constitution for the corporation and pleaded for the remedying of defects in the existing charter. It was favourably received, and was referred to the committee for charters but, by the spring of 1657, it was clear that the remodelling of the charter would not take place; twelve months after the petition the corporation submitted its own list of

⁶ For a detailed examination of Baynes's dealings with the council over the charter, see Derek Hirst, 'The Fracturing of the Cromwellian Alliance: Leeds and Adam Baynes', *English Historical Review*, CVIII (1993), 868–94.

headings for a new charter but, in the spring of 1658, it abandoned the project by requesting confirmation of the existing charter. Soon political developments nationally were undermining the influence of Baynes and his associates but the eventual eclipse of the radicals in 1658–59 was accompanied by growing insecurity and confusion in the town: Quaker disturbances; rioting against the excise tax; depressed trade; personal animosities. By the Restoration in 1660, therefore, the vexed question of the charter remained unsolved: none of the aspirations had been achieved.

4—The Government of Restoration Leeds

I

At the Restoration in May 1660, Leeds was a town wracked by tension, insecurity and anxiety, the inevitable consequences of the political upheavals and contention nationally during the preceding months. Locally, there was growing confusion because the existing governing body, like similar institutions elsewhere, had served the various regimes which followed the execution of Charles I and the establishment of republican rule. In Leeds, the new royal government faced two problems: whether the members of the corporation held office lawfully; and whether the charter of 1626 under which they operated was still valid in law. Charles II's government needed loyal, reliable local governors but in the chartered boroughs it was hampered by a serious obstacle, namely that by their charters the corporations themselves filled vacancies in the governing bodies and appointed their own officials. The King's ministers therefore had to find a different way of putting the corporations into the hands of Royalists who had been displaced by victorious Parliamentarians, or recruiting reliable newcomers to office.

In Leeds, local initiative played an influential part in securing a new charter, the displacement of serving councillors, and the appointment of new men. Benjamin Wade, who had been displaced for Royalist sympathies and was the only surviving pre-war principal burgess, and four former assistants, with the support of some of the wealthiest and best affected merchants and townsmen as well as county gentry, petitioned the King in January 1661. They complained about the illegal exclusion of Royalist councillors and the appointment of inferior successors, whose loyalty should be examined; as an alternative to a purge they suggested that the new charter, allegedly agreed to but not issued in the autumn of 1642, should now be confirmed; and they invited the King to make suitable appointments to the corporation thereby reconstituted. Shortly afterwards, Wade's group congratulated the King on his restoration and presented a gift. About the same time a counter-petition was submitted in the names of nineteen members of the existing common council, comprising the incumbent alderman, six principal burgesses, and twelve assistants, together with the recorder. They asserted that their opponents were making false allegations in order to displace them and take their offices, and that, far from being minded to surrender the charter of 1626, they wished it to remain in operation. Both petitions were referred to the Attorney General for consideration. He reported that the Leeds charter lacked legal validity

because it had, in effect, been suspended during the earlier 1640s; members of the common council had been illegally dismissed and new councillors wrongly intruded; of the duly elected members, only one principal burgess and eight assistants were still alive, a number which would be insufficient to discharge the duties required. The recommendation, therefore, was that the King should meet Wade's petition by issuing a new charter of incorporation, nominating the first members of the common council and the principal officers.

Accordingly, after years of contention, in November 1661 Leeds received its second charter of incorporation, establishing government by a mayor, twelve aldermen and twenty-four assistants; the first holders of those offices were nominated in the charter, with life tenure, their appointments having been approved — possibly even suggested — by some of Yorkshire's leading gentry. A large proportion of the existing corporators was displaced. The first mayor was to be Thomas Danby of Farnley, himself a member of the county gentry but with close Leeds connections.¹ Three of the five signatories of the Royalist petition returned to the council, Wade and William Marshall (who had served as a principal burgess until 1656) as aldermen and William Curtis as an assistant. Only two of the Parliamentary counter-petition's supporters seem to have been nominated, Robert Pickering, who refused an assistantship, and John Dawson, who joined his fellow former principal burgesses, Francis Allanson and Marmaduke Hick, as aldermen; all three had been associated with the Presbyterian congregation of the Revd Robert Todd at St John's church. The remaining principal burgesses in office at the Restoration lost their places on the council under the new charter. In their stead came either members of the pre-war civic elite, such as Wade and Marshall, or some of their relatives and kinsmen, Henry Skelton, John Hopton, John Metcalfe and Christopher Watkinson, for example. Eight of the thirteen aldermen chosen in 1661 were interlinked through blood or marriage. Again, amongst the new assistants are the names of local families of standing — Cowper, Busfield, Hutchinson, Hodgson — along with others who were establishing themselves in the upper ranks of local society and would play an increasingly prominent role in public affairs during the ensuing decades — Ibbetsons, Kitchingmans, Milners, Dixons.² Loyalty to the restored monarchy, tested by an array of oaths, was the touchstone for appointment, and the government had to give authority to firmly established local figures upon whose services it could rely for the maintenance of good order. As far as Leeds was concerned, the changes in the governing body achieved by the new charter were sufficiently far-reaching to make unnecessary a visitation by the commissioners charged under the Corporation Act (1661) with regulating the membership of borough councils.

¹ Alderman Edward Atkinson served as his deputy.

² See below *Aldermen of Leeds*, 1646–61 and under the second and third charters.

II

The affairs of the Church remained to be settled following two decades of upheaval, religious cross-currents — notably the rivalry between Presbyterians and Independents and the militant activities of the Quakers — and the tensions to which they gave rise, presenting an immediate and serious obstacle to the attainment of peaceable religious uniformity. Nevertheless, during the months preceding the Restoration there were signs of a return to more traditional ways in church life: an important cause of lay discontent disappeared with the abandonment of compulsory civil marriage conducted by JPs, and the reversion of that particular duty to the clergy; some prominent Leeds men, including principal burgesses, called for a return to the orderly seating of the congregation in the parish church according to their social status; and fragmentary evidence suggests that Vicar Styles was again using the *Book of Common Prayer* rather than the *Directory of Public Worship*. At St John's, the trustees purchased a new surplice and a Prayer Book in 1660, as well as repairing the bell, bell rope and clock, together with the fabric of the church itself, measures which suggest that the church had suffered recent neglect under Robert Todd's otherwise energetic Presbyterian ministry.

A significant incident at the parish church, however, shows that religious antagonism, suspicion, and unease lay not far below the surface. Soon after the Restoration, the vicar of Leeds, William Styles, was able to return to his living at Hessle and Hull (from which he had been ejected in 1650), but he died early in 1661. There was now a vacancy at Leeds, and the Revd Dr John Lake was lawfully presented to the living. Lake had fought in the Royalist army before his ordination, his nomination had apparently been supported by the Laudian dean of York, Dr Richard Marsh, he was regarded (perhaps rightly in view of his subsequent record) as an upholder of the Laudian (or 'High Church') tradition and an opponent of Puritan teaching.³ On the day of his induction Lake found his entry to the church barred by a crowd of people who would have none of the new vicar. The man they wanted was the Revd Edward Bowles, a Parliamentarian and a Presbyterian, not a major figure but one who in his time had been chaplain to the Lord General Fairfax; he had the support of three Presbyterian and Parliamentarian burgesses who were still in office. Eventually Lake was able to enter the church, but only with the help of a file of soldiers who had dispersed the protesters.

That episode was only a minor affair but the rivalries and bitterness which it reflects can only have been aggravated locally by the Act for the

³ John Lake (1624–89), vicar of Leeds 1661–63, later successively bishop of Sodor and Man, Bristol and Chichester; one of the 'Seven Bishops' who defied James II; subsequently a Nonjuror who refused the oath of allegiance to William and Mary.

Uniformity of Public Prayers (1662), which required clergy and schoolmasters to subscribe to a declaration of non-resistance to the monarch and a promise to conform to the liturgy of the Church of England on pain of loss of their appointments. The Act claimed important victims in Leeds. At the parish church, Vicar Lake was safe, but the lecturer, Christopher Ness, was deprived; he and Jeremiah Marsden, curate at East Ardsley, had already aroused the suspicions of the authorities for holding 'factious meetings' in the district. Robert Todd, the minister at St John's, was ejected along with his curate, James Sale. John Garnet, the controversial master of Leeds Grammar School and Todd's son-in-law, lost his post, as did the usher at the school, Israel Hawksworth. The latter's father, Thomas, was ejected from Hunslet chapel, and Robert Armitage, curate at Holbeck, was also deprived. It is possible that the ministers at Beeston, Farnley and Chapel Allerton were ejected, and more clergy suffered the same fate in the vicinity of Leeds, including the curates at Tong and Horsforth, as well as one of the most notable victims, Elkanah Wales at Pudsey. By contrast, at Adel there was a smoother transfer of office: Thomas Sharp, rector since 1660, resigned the living when it was claimed by a sequestered predecessor, Robert Hitch. But many of the ejected clergy risked hardship and danger by defiantly remaining in the area to continue their ministrations and develop a tradition of Nonconformity.

III

If the restored monarchy sought (but in vain) to re-establish the Church of England in the position occupied before 1642, it nevertheless permitted innovations in the new charter of incorporation granted to Leeds in 1661. The charter declared that of 1626 null and void and created a new corporate body politic. It vested the government of the borough in a mayor, twelve aldermen and twenty-four assistants forming the common council. Because of the serious and prolonged disputes and complaints, an additional body was created for the regulation of the cloth industry. If the council intended to issue orders affecting the manufacture, dyeing or sale of cloth its proposals were to be laid before the common assembly, a new body comprising forty of the more 'sufficient' clothworkers of the town, and to be approved by the majority, whose assent to penalties was also required; the orders were to be binding on clothworkers and merchants alike. There were other significant changes. The corporation was authorised to raise money by means of a rate, an undoubtedly important power which by no means all corporate boroughs enjoyed. The office of common (or town) clerk was formally instituted, the first holder of the office being named in the charter, along with the recorder; both officers were permitted to appoint their own deputies but future nominations to

the recordership and the clerkship were retained in the King's hands, a very important proviso. In future, the mayor, aldermen, recorder and deputy recorder were to be justices of the peace and were permitted to hold quarter sessions for the borough, but in the absence of any records until 1698 it is not possible to be sure how regularly sessions were held before that date.

For the rest, the provisions of the charter of 1626 were either repeated or more closely defined. Arrangements for the annual election of a mayor and for the choice of new aldermen and assistants were clearly laid down; penalties for refusal of office or neglect of duties were formalised to ensure that they had a legal basis. The powers and procedures of the magistrates were more carefully — and legalistically — defined, with both the common clerk and the sergeants-at-mace being involved in carrying them out; one aspect of those measures was to ensure that the arrangements for the distraint and sale of goods and chattels in cases of refusal to pay fines or rates were legally watertight. As for the common council, the mayor had clear authority to summon members to meetings and to exercise a casting vote; a quorum of nineteen, including the mayor and at least four aldermen, was to be enforced, and members were liable to a fine for inadequately explained absence. Arrangements for the Tuesday market and the court of pie-powder were repeated, along with the enforcement of the assize of bread and ale, but, in addition, the mayor and aldermen were empowered to exercise control over all victuallers, whether townsfolk or from the countryside. Finally, manorial rights were to be preserved.

The powers, whether newly granted or confirmed, described in the charter of 1661 were by no means unique and could be matched — with variations — in the charters secured by many boroughs, especially those which were expanding, at the time. Nevertheless, for Leeds the charter had a certain importance. It defined or settled particular points which the charter of 1626 had left uncertain. It enhanced the authority and dignity of the principal members of the common council, the mayor and aldermen, and it extended and confirmed the rights and privileges of the corporation. Lastly, although — once again — it did not grant parliamentary representation to Leeds it undoubtedly strengthened local government in the town.

The operation of the charter was interrupted in consequence of the political and religious tensions of the 1680s when the government of Charles II attempted to strengthen its influence over county JPs and town corporations alike. Legal proceedings were mounted against municipal charters, and in order to escape confiscation by that method and a possible fine, the mayor and council decided on 17 October 1684 to surrender the charter voluntarily and supplicate for a replacement; on 24 December 1684 a third charter of incorporation was granted. Although it makes no allusion to the charter of 1661, in many respects it follows the provisions of that document. The structure of the governing body, with a mayor, aldermen

and assistants was retained, but the number of aldermen was increased to fourteen. All those in office at the surrender were permitted to continue but to their number was added the King's nominee for mayor, Gervase Neville, a member of the county gentry with property in Leeds; he thus replaced the elected mayor, Joshua Ibbetson, who was returned to office at the autumn election in 1685.

Most of the assistants were again appointed but three new ones were nominated. The long-serving recorder, Francis White, and the recently appointed common clerk, Castilion Morris, were continued in office but to work with the latter a joint common clerk was named; the filling of vacancies in all three offices was reserved to the Crown. In addition, there were minor or technical changes to legal powers, and some of the clauses in the charter of 1661 were now confirmed in summary form. The common assembly for the consideration of orders affecting cloth manufacture was retained, and the charter gave legal recognition to the cloth market held on Tuesdays and Saturdays in Briggate, to which it had been removed earlier in 1684; all cloth made in the town was to be fully finished before being taken elsewhere, to avoid unfinished cloth being fraudulently stretched, thereby damaging the reputation of the Leeds product. There was one innovation of major significance. Although the customary method of choosing aldermen and assistants was confirmed, the Crown reserved the right to dismiss the mayor, other members of the council, the recorder, and the town clerks. That provision, which was imposed in new charters for a considerable number of corporate boroughs at the time, gave the royal government extensive powers of interference and was a serious encroachment upon the usually accepted privileges of corporations.

The charter of 1684 remained in force for only about four years before it lapsed, in common with similar charters in other towns, as a result of James II's last, panic-stricken actions and flight. Consequently, the charter of 1661 was automatically restored, and its essential provisions continued in force until the municipal reforms of 1835 and even beyond.

IV

The council which took office in 1661 did so in an atmosphere of uncertainty. For much of the 1660s, Leeds was regarded by the government as a disaffected town, 'the most dangerous place in Yorkshire'. There was suspicion of 'factious' meetings and alarm at the activities, actual or alleged, of old republicans in the district. The incident involving Vicar Lake stirred concerns about the unwelcome influence of certain disloyal preachers. The sight of a group of men on horseback produced a scare, and supposedly seditious language was reported to the authorities. The abortive rising

of 1663 known as the Farnley Wood Plot exacerbated the tensions.⁴ Its objective was, it seems, to capture Leeds, and it involved a number of men connected with the town. During the summer, there had been rumours of a plot, and a force of the recently reconstituted militia arrived in Leeds as a precaution; the turn-out at the rebels' rendezvous was lower than hoped for, and the rising collapsed. Captured participants were harshly treated: eleven men were convicted of being in arms at Holbeck and Hunslet en route for Farnley Wood, and seven of the executed rebels were Leeds men. The attempted insurrection reflects the area's disaffection, which neither its failure nor the punishments apparently did much to diminish. More than once troops were sent to Leeds to prevent threatened trouble, and on one occasion the churchwardens at St John's had to repair windows when soldiers held exercises in the churchyard.

Most of the evidence for concern with public order and security is to be found in the State Papers, rather than in the first surviving court book of the corporation which otherwise provides much detailed information about its work after 1661. The common council met irregularly, with no fixed calendar save for 29 September, the annual occasion for the election of the mayor. Aldermen or assistants who were absent without good reason could be fined 10s. or 5s. for each absence; on average about two-thirds of the council attended each meeting. Nothing is known of discussions in the council chamber but rules of debate were established along with a modest degree of formality and ceremony: the chairmanship of the mayor, with a casting vote; the wearing of gowns; processions; rules of precedence. The common council showed further concern for the orderly conduct of business by trying in 1666 to recover the lost records of the earlier period of the corporation's existence. Apart from routine, there were festive occasions to be observed and, as in other corporate towns, there was an official cook to cater for the limited amount of civic junketing as well as the entertainment of such distinguished visitors as the king's judges or the archbishop of York.

In dealing with its own affairs the council perforce spent much time filling vacancies in its membership by means of co-option. Newcomers to municipal office as assistants had to pay what amounted to an entry fine of £6 13s. 4d. (20 nobles), and a similar sum was payable by those later promoted to aldermen. If, however, they refused to accept the office they were liable to penalties of much greater sums, ranging from £20 to £50, and there is no doubt that the council regarded fines for office (sometimes called exonerations) as a useful source of income. Once chosen, a member of the common council could remain in office for life, and there were

⁴ There are several published accounts of the plot, the most recent being A. Hopper, 'The Farnley Wood Plot and the Memory of the Civil Wars in Yorkshire', *Historical Journal*, 45 (2002), 281–303. Farnley Wood was in Batley parish.

some notable periods of service: Henry Skelton, for example, was an alderman from 1661 to 1694, Alderman Godfrey Lawson served for twenty-five years, and Alderman Daniel Foxcroft for twenty-four years. From time to time, members of the council were ousted for persistent non-attendance, possibly the consequence of removal from Leeds, and some left because of age or ill-health. There was, therefore, a turnover in membership: between 1661 and 1677 nine aldermen and eighteen assistants were replaced. Resignation, however, was not an easy matter, as Ralph Thoresby discovered: after becoming an assistant in June 1697, he found that the duties of membership interfered with his antiquarian pursuits, but, after more than one attempt to resign, he was only allowed to do so in 1713.

The corporation had wider concerns than its own membership and meetings, endeavouring to exercise some influence on social life and economic activity in the town. As early as January 1662 it took a measure of responsibility for the relief of the poor. It issued an elaborate scheme for the prevention of begging and for the provision of relief: a regular assessment to produce a stock for the poor throughout the parish was ordered; Leeds was divided into six wards, in each of which aldermen and others were to supervise the parish overseers in the discharge of their statutory duties towards the poor; a clothier was appointed master of the house of correction, in which the inmates could be taught one of the textile crafts. Four years later, the council was still trying to trace charitable funds which had vanished during the 1640s and 1650s; in 1672, to facilitate closer supervision of the overseers by aldermen and assistants, the number of wards was increased to fifteen, and householders were forbidden to give relief to beggars at their doors; and in 1674 a new survey of the necessitous poor was ordered. In taking these measures, the corporation was no doubt aware of the connection between poverty, vagrancy, and public disorder. The councillors' responsibilities for poor relief did not end there, however, because as a consequence of the continuing overlap in membership between the common council and the committee for pious uses they played an influential part in the management of certain charities and the property with which they were endowed.

The council remained committed to the regulation of industry. In addition to the common assembly of clothiers introduced in the charter of 1661, it supported the successful campaign for the West Riding Broadcloth Company, to be governed by officers drawn half from Leeds, half from the wider area, with power to devise orders, organise searches, enforce apprenticeship, and impose fines; this body had a shadowy existence and apparently lapsed in the 1680s. Above all, before the end of 1662 the corporation resolved to bring local industry more firmly under control by organising (or possibly re-organising) eighteen occupations in six guilds: clothworkers; mercers, grocers, drapers and certain retailers; building craftsmen; cordwainers; tailors; ironmongers and smiths. The governing

ordinances of these guilds (of which only one set has survived) seem similar to those framed under the charter of 1626, but it is significant that in 1662 only the mayor and common council, not the guild officers, had the power to alter the rules. Thereafter, incoming, unqualified craftsmen were carefully checked, apprenticeship regulations were enforced along with guild membership, and the council itself adjudicated in inter-guild disputes, or between guilds and individuals. How far guild rules were effective in upholding standards of workmanship is far from clear, and the council's decision in 1686 to discuss with the masters of the guilds possible renewal of their ordinances may reflect difficulties, though the enforcement of guild rules at least for clothworkers continued into the next century.

Along with the corporation's enduring attempts to regulate local industries went orders for the conduct of markets, conceived in the interests of customers and the protection of supplies. To prevent the forestalling of corn in times of scarcity there were to be no sales before the market bell was rung; weights and measures were to be inspected regularly; and the mayor's officers were required to check the quality and prices of goods offered for sale. It is likely that in Leeds, as elsewhere, control of markets was most vigorous in times of scarcity and trade depression, but the corporation's court book provides no evidence for the effectiveness of its measures. Moreover, the enforcement of social and economic legislation lay with the aldermen as JPs, and offenders would have been punished in the petty or quarter sessions, of which no records have survived.

Another important aspect of the council's work is to be seen in its vigorous defence of the town's interests, rights and privileges. It engaged in a lawsuit of some twelve years' duration to ensure that the chartered privilege of exemption from tolls for its townspeople was secured at the markets in Wakefield and Hull. It supported the complaint of Leeds clothiers and merchants against the action of the corporation of London in altering the arrangements and raising the charges for cloth sent to the great cloth market at Blackwell Hall, a move detrimental to the interests of the cloth industry. On other occasions, the council defended the immunity of Leeds men from the obligation of jury service at the county assizes; in the interests of commerce, it attempted to obtain the appointment of a post-master in Leeds who would take charge of the carriage of letters between the town and the main postal route at Ferrybridge; and it undertook prolonged litigation to defend the interests of Leeds in a dispute over the responsibility for the repair of the road to Pontefract.

The work of the corporation obviously cost money and all too often could be hampered by inadequate financial resources. Revenue could be raised in a variety of ways: entry fines on appointment to both ranks of membership of the common council; fines for office; financial penalties imposed on councillors for breaches of standing orders; fines levied by law courts or guilds; outright gifts; rates for municipal purposes. The right to

levy a rate on householders was not possessed by all corporations, and in Leeds it was not exercised regularly; the assessment was based on a multiple of the parish poor rate (say six-fold, ten-fold, or even higher, depending on need). Thus, at different times a full borough rate was levied, to meet the cost of repairing the gaol in 1678, for example, or to pay the considerable expenses of litigation in defence of the town's rights and privileges. Leeds corporation lacked the sources of income at the disposal of older, wealthier boroughs and was (dangerously, perhaps) dependent on funds supplied, permanently or temporarily, by its own members. An alderman acted as treasurer, and there were attempts to enforce the prompt payment of dues such as fines or tolls, as well as to recover arrears. The mayor had at his disposal for public purposes a fund which fluctuated between £65 and £80 annually, but by the late 1670s the financial shortfall was becoming more serious. One indication of difficulty was that, in 1679, the common council — having recognised the trading benefits which would accrue — accepted in principle a plan to improve the navigation of the river Aire but amongst its members only the mayor, William Pickering, was prepared to underwrite the project which therefore foundered. During the early 1680s, there were renewed attempts to increase income, and in 1686 a committee was appointed to examine the accounts and suggest the means of clearing the corporation's debts. Faced with debts calculated in April 1688 to exceed £200, the council obtained a loan, re-imbursed its creditors by instalments, injected new vigour into the collection of moneys owing to it, and tried to control its finances more closely, especially by keeping a watchful eye on expenditure.

V

The common council continued to exercise responsibility in Church affairs. One of its first acts under the charter of 1661 was an order for the better observance of the Sabbath, the churchwardens and constables being instructed. to report what was amiss to the mayor and aldermen. Their next orders, both of which reflected disorganisation during the preceding two years, called on the churchwardens to draw up their overdue accounts and present them for audit, and gave them authority to assess an eight-fold church rate, the proceeds to pay for repairs and a new font at the parish church. Later, the corporation made a seven-year agreement with some plumbers and glaziers for the repair of the church windows. In 1672, the council made an order for regulating the church rate, and during the next year appointed eleven men, several of them corporators, to fill vacancies on the trust for the advowson. On the whole, during the 1660s and 1670s the

parochial clergy seem to have conducted church affairs in an orderly fashion. Lake's successor as vicar of Leeds, Marmaduke Cooke, was a peaceable man and a good preacher, and the archbishop's visitations found no serious offences.

Nevertheless, the town's reputation for disaffection could not be gained. Apart from political strains (the legacy of the Interregnum), it had developed because the whole area had become a hotbed of Nonconformist services and preaching, held in secret to avoid the forces of the law. There were notable preachers in and around the town: Christopher Ness was one; another was Cornelius Todd, son of the controversial minister at St John's; there was the well-known Elkanah Wales; and there was the most famous of all, Oliver Heywood, who recorded his ministrations and sufferings in his diaries. Dissenting congregations were spied upon and harried; Quaker meetings were dispersed; people were imprisoned; amidst their many responsibilities, the aldermen, as magistrates, remained watchful and alarmed. The atmosphere of hostility and suspicion in official circles has to be seen alongside clear signs of the strength and resilience of local Nonconformity, qualities reflected in the licensing of no fewer than ten private buildings in the town for the measure of Nonconformist worship tolerated under the Declaration of Indulgence in 1672, the year of the foundation of Mill Hill chapel for a congregation first guided by one of Sir Thomas Fairfax's Presbyterian chaplains, Richard Streeton.

As Nonconformity grew in strength nationally, accompanied by the political distemper of the Exclusion crisis, Leeds, in common with other towns, came under governmental pressure to enforce political loyalty to the Stuarts and religious uniformity. In 1680, the governing body had to satisfy the King's ministers and the county lieutenancy that corporators had fulfilled the requirements for certain oaths, a declaration, and the taking of the Church's sacrament. Having provided the necessary assurances, the corporation presented a loyal address to Charles II, a move that did not prevent further pressure which eventually resulted in the surrender of the charter in 1684 and the acceptance of a new one (followed swiftly by another loyal address, this time to James II). Soon afterwards, the common council deemed it wise to draw up a new set of bye-laws. By the mid 1680s the town's governing body appears to have been firmly Anglican and Tory, in part at least because of resignations or displacements: both Alderman Joseph Ibbetson and his wife were suspected of being conventiclors, and he resigned, seemingly under pressure, in 1681; the issue of the new charter in 1684 resulted in the departure of at least three assistants; in 1685, Alderman Foxcroft admitted that he had taken none of the oaths required (a fact that he had concealed for some time) and was ousted; soon afterwards Alderman Lawson, who had been reluctant to take the oaths, resigned to re-emerge later as a supporter of the Earl of Danby's conspiracy

against James II; and members of such prominent families as Baynes, Pawson and Wade refused office.

The majority of the aldermen-JPs, with Alderman Headley prominent amongst them, showed themselves ready to attack their adversaries, the ministers and townspeople whose religious and political loyalties were suspect. Consequently, a very bitter campaign of persecution began. As before, spies kept watch for conventicles and informed against them; Non-conformists assembled for worship were dispersed, the ringleaders arrested; the keys of Mill Hill chapel were confiscated to prevent services there; the magistrates inflicted harsh punishments. Ralph Thoresby was one of those arrested, but he had friends in high places and escaped penalty. Many Quakers suffered for their faith particularly severely. Thoresby, although still a firm supporter of Dissent, had little sympathy with them: 'poor deluded Quakers' he called them, when, one day in 1683, he saw more than fifty of them being taken off to prison in York Castle. In that charged, threatening atmosphere James II's Declaration of Indulgence in 1687 received a cautious welcome from Leeds Dissenters and, when Thomas Sharp, the minister at Mill Hill, secured three dozen signatures to an address of thanks to the King, the signatories included members of prominent civic families: Ibbetson, Milner, Fenton, Spencer, as well as Thoresby himself.⁵ Later in the year, the Three Questions, put to the country's magistrates to assess their reactions to the proposed repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, elicited from all the aldermen and the recorder identical but equivocal replies in which they avoided any open declaration against the policy but expressed support for reasonable votes by the House of Commons and loyalty to the Church of England. During the government's continuing regulation of town corporations there were rumours that the council at Leeds would be packed with Dissenters but there was no such purge and, for much of 1688, normal business, a large part of it financial, was still being conducted.

Following a seemingly routine meeting on 29 September 1688, at which Thomas Kitchingman was elected mayor, there is no evidence that the council met again until 31 August 1689. The intervening months had been a period of uncertainty and tension, with the flight of James II and the arrival of William of Orange, and an incident in December 1688 reveals something of the fevered atmosphere in the town. The Roman Catholic recusants in Leeds, few in number and lacking in social standing, presented no threat, but there was alarm when it was rumoured that an Irish Popish army, bent on the restoration of King James, had arrived at the outskirts of Leeds and was setting fire to Beeston. In the ensuing panic, a band of townsmen, armed with whatever they could lay their hands on, marched

south over the bridge to offer resistance to the supposed enemy, and the authorities needed the reassuring presence of a detachment of militia to restore calm. By February 1689, however, the situation had improved to allow public rejoicing at the formal proclamation of William III and Mary as monarchs. From that ceremony six aldermen absented themselves — Dixon, Hick, Idle, Pawson, Potter and Skelton — possibly because they disliked the change in the succession (as did the town clerk) but only Pawson left the council, and normal business was resumed in the summer. Within a year, the vicar of Leeds, John Milner, had refused to recognise the new order, joined the ranks of the Nonjurors, and left the living; a majority of the trustees then elected John Killingbeck, the eldest son of a former mayor, to succeed him. By then, the usual work of the corporation had been resumed.

VI

During the seventeenth century, the council's activities spread over a much narrower field than did those of the ancient corporations of York and Hull which had more elaborate constitutions, larger resources, and no doubt greater problems. In Leeds, municipal government was cheap, possibly too cheap, based on finances best described as hand-to-mouth, but the council's business reflects the extent of the members' willingness to spend time and energy on municipal affairs, and their understanding of the direction required. The early seventeenth-century contention about the cloth industry gave way to a later emphasis on other aspects of the town's interests: the charter; trading links; the maintenance of rights and privileges. The aldermen not only served as magistrates concerned with public order, but took responsibility for the relief of the poor, the management of charities and the grammar school, the appointment of clergy, the care of the parish church, the protection of the interests of the town's craftsmen, as well as the orderly conduct of public affairs and the expression of corporate identity in processions and public ceremonial. During the two decades following the Revolution of 1688–89 there were notable examples of similar civic pride and concern. In 1694, a fine new mace was commissioned, a symbol of public authority and the town's growing prosperity. About the same time, the corporation authorised the construction of Sorocold's waterworks, a device for pumping water from the river and distributing it through the streets. In 1699, members of the council played a leading part in securing the permissive legislation for the improvement of the navigation of the Aire and Calder. They made an important contribution to the establishment of the charity school in 1705, and were also

prominent in the scheme to build the first cloth hall. Finally, finding the Moot Hall inadequate and unworthy of the town's standing and prosperity, the corporation decided in 1710 to rebuild it in a handsome style as a fitting symbol of eighty years of local self-government and achievement. In all these undertakings members of the council identified themselves with the developing interests of the town.

Part Two — The Aldermen of Leeds (1626–1700)

Joan Kirby, BA, MPhil

The accordance of interest between the Crown and the leading merchants of Leeds that existed for most of the period is demonstrated by the dominance of those ‘honest and discreet men’ preferred by the Crown and nominated in the first Royal charter of 1626, who controlled the government and its trade as a self-perpetuating oligarchy. It might be supposed that those who replaced them in the Interregnum Corporation would have included smaller clothiers and tradesmen, but it is clear that, although of opposing religious and political views, the new rulers were members of the same commercial élite as their predecessors. Indeed, much political controversy during the Interregnum centred on the Leeds MP Adam Baynes’s attempt to obtain a more liberal charter which would have given a share of municipal power to the smaller clothiers of the mainriding. Events at Westminster supervened, however, and the Restoration charter of 1661 was as élitist as its predecessor.

Bound together by community of interest, intermarriage and, not infrequently, genuine affection, the ranks of the élite were from time to time rejuvenated by an influx of scions of county gentry or yeoman families, like the Foxcrofts, Wades, Lawsons and Stanhopes, settled, perhaps, on sequestered monastic land, who could afford the high apprenticeship fees charged by the most successful commercial houses.

But there were misfits. For example, fanatics like Martin Iles, who relentlessly pursued John Harrison, and Martin Headley whose rabid anti-Exclusionism made him insufferable to his colleagues, appear conspicuous as outsiders; as also, perhaps, does Richard Sykes. The only original principal burgess who does not seem to have been tainted with delinquency, he does not figure among those who gave aid and comfort to their beleaguered colleagues; and although all but one outlived him it is perhaps significant that his will contains no reference to any of them. Because of the exiguity of the corporation’s finances there was little opportunity for chicanery. On the contrary, those who aspired to leadership were expected to pay a high fee for the privilege and dig deep into their pockets for advances of cash to meet pressing needs, such as road maintenance, repairs to public buildings, legal fees, wages, expenses and repayment of debts.

A few, like Ralph Hopton and Seth Skelton (parish gentlemen who were appointed by the Crown in 1626), showed little interest in civic affairs, whilst others seem to have lost their enthusiasm for some reason: Joseph Ibbetson, for example, may have become involved in religious Dissent, and there is a hint that, after useful service, Henry Pawson's stance as a Nonjuror may have rendered him ineligible for promotion. Most aldermen continued in office for life, perhaps because resignation for reasons other than old-age or ill health incurred a fine of not less than £30, although it is doubtful whether the corporation often succeeded in levying it; similarly fines were imposed for non-attendance at council meetings. Occasionally his colleagues employed draconian tactics to stir up a recalcitrant. Thus, Thomas Lazenby, a half-hearted assistant, was galvanized by promotion to the bench and soon afterwards election as mayor. In general, however, the great majority of alderman gave long and useful service. If they enjoyed the esteem of their fellow townsmen they paid for it with their time and money.¹

Abbreviations used in the Initial Biographical Details

bro. = brother; bur. = buried; coh. = co-heir/heiress; cr. = created; dioc. = diocese; e. = earl; Jr = junior; LPC. Leeds Parish Church; m. = married; princ. burg. = principal burgess; resnd. = resigned; s. = son; sis. = sister; Snr = senior; surv. = surviving; visc. = viscount; w. = wife; wid. = widow; yeo. = yeoman

† trustee of Leeds Parish Church
 ‡ member of the Committee of Pious Uses
 * indicates a biographical entry

I THE FIRST CHARTER 1626–43

*BENSON, Robert (d. 1647), of Briggate, Wakefield and Lincoln's Inn, attorney†
 princ. burg. 1626; alderman 1628–29
 m. (1) Susan King of Leeds, d. 1641 (2) Elizabeth Bridges of Sedgfield, dioc. of Durham; no issue*

Robert Benson came of a professional family of minor gentry living, at Wrenthorpe, near Wakefield. Described in 1624 as an attorney of the court of king's bench, his training at Lincoln's Inn and success in establishing a

¹ See Joan Kirby, 'A Leeds Élite: the Principal Burgesses of the First Leeds Corporation', *N(orthern) H(istory)*, XX (1984), 88–107; G. C. F. Forster, 'The Early Years of Leeds Corporation', *P(ublications of the) Th(oresby) S(ociety)*, LIV (1979), 251–61.

practice at Westminster enabled him to occupy a good position in the local courts, including the Council in the North (until its suppression in 1641). Indeed, Sir Henry Savile gave it as his opinion that Thomas Metcalfe,* Robert Benson and John Harrison* (by whom Benson was retained as counsel) were the most influential men in the newly formed municipality.² One of the founders of the House of Correction, Benson was also a member of the Committee of Pious Uses and, in 1637, was appointed clerk of the peace of the West Riding, a post he retained until his disgrace nine years later at the hands of the victorious Parliamentarians. Though he afterwards denied having taken up arms, his ardent support of the Royal cause cost him dear: deprived of his clerkship and dispossessed of his chambers in Lincoln's Inn, he was also, as *persona non grata*, inhibited from pleading in the courts. Like other delinquents he suffered a heavy fine as the price for the redemption of his sequestered lands and investments in Leeds, Wakefield, Beeston and the forest of Galtres; his condition was further reduced through the vandalising of his house in Briggate and the destruction of his debt books and other records. Perhaps because of his failure to purge his delinquency he was committed to Newgate prison where he died in November 1647, leaving his real estate enfeoffed to his 'loving friends' Joseph Hillary* and Benjamin Wade* in trust for his nephew and heir, John Benson. Annexed to the will is a schedule of sums totalling £534 10s. due to him.³

John Benson, who served as a captain of horse under the Earl of Newcastle but deserted to the Parliamentarians *c.* 1646, possibly in a politic move to provide the family with a foot in both camps, died within two years of his uncle; so it was probably Robert's godson and namesake — also mentioned in the will — who continued the legal practice in Leeds.

CASSON, Samuel (*d.* 1643), of Briggate, lawyer†
princ. burg. 1626; *alderman* 1627–28, 1635–36
s. of William C. of Briggate, yeo.; m. Clare —, who may have been his
2nd w; no surv. issue
bur. LPC

In the changing economic and social climate of later Tudor Leeds, William Casson and his four formidable brothers, with their households

² Kirby, *NH*, XX, 94n.; *Chapters in the History of Yorkshire*, ed. by J. J. Cartwright (1872), p. 305n.; *The Wentworth Papers*, ed. by J. P. Cooper, Camden Society, 4th ser., XII (1973), 251; *W(est) Y(orkshire) A(rchives) S(ervice) L(eeds)*, DB204/1, pp. 84–85.

³ *Old Leeds Charities, the First and Second Decree of the Committee of Pious Uses in Leeds* (1926), p. 41; 'The Committee of Charitable Uses, Leeds, Extracts from the Minute Books', *PThS*, XXII (1915), 355–408; *Y(orkshire) R(oyalist) C(omposition) P(apers)*, I, *Y(orkshire) A(rchaeological) S(ociety) R(ecord) S(eries)*, XV (1893), 88–89; II, *ibid.*, XVIII (1895), 128; *Records of the Society of Lincoln's Inn*, 4 vols. (1872–1902), I, 368–71; 'A Catalogue of Wills at Somerset House for the Years 1649–1660', ed. by Francis Collins, *YASRS*, I (1883), 62; *T(he) N(ational) A(rchives)*, Prob.11/202, fol. 207.

and numerous connections, were part of a kinship network which embraced most, if not all, of the leading clothier families, whose struggle for civic privileges led to the grant of incorporation.¹ Almost certainly the first member of the family to enter the legal profession, Samuel's legal training may have been through apprenticeship rather than an inn of court or chancery, but his success in practice is attested by his being one of the few Leeds men to have been caught up in Charles I's money-raising schemes: the privy seal loan of 1626 and the fines for distraint to knighthood of 1630–32. In 1599, he served as deputy sheriff of the West Riding and, in 1623, was steward of Sir Arthur Ingram's manor of Halton. By 1619, he was one of four members of the family serving as governor of the grammar school and the following year saw his appointment to the newly constituted Committee of Pious Uses.²

As a supporter of Sir Thomas Wentworth, who had taken up the cause of the smaller clothiers of the West Riding, Casson wrote urging him to stand for the first place in the county election of 1620, and promising him the support of a hundred freeholders in and about Leeds. Such partisanship doubtless aroused the hostility of Wentworth's bitter rival for the leadership of Yorkshire, Sir John Savile.*³

Having bequeathed legacies and annuities amounting to more than £250 to clergy, relations and servants, and despite his awareness that he had not provided for all his poor relations, Casson devoted substantial resources to such causes as the highways and the poor of Holbeck and Aberford. To the poor of Leeds, however, he left in perpetuity the rents of a half-messuage which he vested in the alderman and burgesses. In the event of the dissolution of the corporation (which he may have foreseen in 1641 as a possibility) the trust was to be transferred to the vicar, churchwardens and overseers of the poor. Furthermore, to give financial help and encouragement to tradesmen needing a start in business, he vested £100 in the alderman and vicar of Leeds to be lent annually interest free to twenty of the most deserving.

¹ Kirby, *NH*, XX, 89–90; *idem*, 'The Rulers of Leeds: Gentry, Clothiers and Merchants c. 1425–1626', *PThS*, LIX (1985), 22–49; G. C. F. Forster, 'The Foundations: from the Earliest Times to c. 1700' in *A History of Modern Leeds*, ed. by Derek Fraser (Manchester, 1980), pp. 11–15.

² *A(cts of the)P(riory) C(ouncil) March 1625–May 1626*, pp. 423–32; 'L(eeds) P(arish) C(hurch) Registers', *PThS*, I (1891), 127 and n.; 'West Riding Quarter Sessions Rolls, 1597–1602', ed. by J. Lester, *YASRS*, III (1888), 164; 'Wills, Inventories and Bonds of the Manor courts of Temple Newsam, 1612–1701', ed. by G. E. Kirk, *PThS*, XXXIII (1935) 260; *WYASL*, DB204/1; W. Paley Baildon, 'Compositions for not Taking Knighthood at the Coronation of Charles I', *YASRS*, LXI (1920), 92–93.

³ *Wentworth Papers*, p.145.

Through his devises and bequests to Francis,* Thomas and Deborah Jackson, including his ninth share in the manor of Leeds, Samuel Casson's will testifies to the longstanding friendship between the two families.⁴

*CROFT, Ralph (d. 1655), of Austhorpe Hall, merchant
assistant 1626; princ. burg. c. 1640
m. Edith — (d. 1643); s. Christopher
request bur. LPC (but no record)*

Although his origins are unknown (there is the possibility of a connection with Alderman Sir Christopher Croft of York),¹ as one of only three assistants to be promoted to burghal status before the Civil War, Ralph Croft was obviously a person of some consequence. Assessed for the privy seal loan of 1626 (which he refused to pay), he was one of the first wardens of the Company of Clothworkers and a founder of the House of Correction.² His daughter Susan's marriages, first to Francis Jackson* and afterwards to John Hopton,* were doubtless considered advantageous by all the parties, whilst her sister Mary's marriage to Joseph Preston, eldest son of the assistant, Christopher Preston, proved a great, though possibly unexpected, blessing to the Preston family. Indeed, one can only speculate on possible reasons for the brief will made by Ralph a few days before his death, whereby he left the bulk of his property, not to his son Christopher, then aged thirty-one (who received merely a competent annuity and a bequest of £50), but in trust for Mary's children, who proved both their worth and their gratitude by producing two future mayors, of whom one was appropriately named Croft.³ As a delinquent, he suffered a heavy fine of £702, of which he paid £203 2s., but refused further remittance until his protracted appeal before the barons of the exchequer for the acceptance of his claim (one commonly made by compounders) that by far the greater proportion of the £3,492 16s.4d. of debts due to him represented desperate debts.⁴

*HARRISON, John (1579–1656), of Boar Lane, merchant†
princ. burg. 1626; deputy alderman July–Sept. 1626; alderman 1626–27,
1634–35*

⁴ Borthwick Institute of Historical Research (hereafter Borthwick). Orig. Wills, October 1643.

¹ 'A Catalogue of the Yorkshire Wills at Somerset House for the Years 1649–1660', compiled by Frances Collins, YASRS, I, 133.

² APC, March 1625–May 1626, pp. 423–32; WYASL, DB204/1, pp. 84–85; *The Manor and Borough of Leeds 1425–1662: an Edition of Documents*, ed. by Joan Kirby, PThS, LVII (1989), 221; *Old Leeds Charities*, p. 41.

³ T(he) N(ational) A(rchives), Prob. 11/260, fol.25.

⁴ YRCP, III, YASRS, XX (1896), 53–54; C(alendar of the) P(roceedings of the) C(ommittee for) C(ompounding with) D(elinquents) 1643–60, ed. by S. E. Green, TNA, 5 vols, (1889–92), II, 646–47.



FIGURE 3 John Harrison, 1579–1656: Leeds benefactor.

An engraving by W. Holl taken from Thoresby's Ducatus, (1816 edn.)

*s. of John H. of Pawdmire (d. 1601); m. Elizabeth, dau. of Thomas Foxcroft; no surv. issue
bur. St John's church.*

As the greatest benefactor in the history of Leeds, John Harrison is deservedly by far the best known of its first civic leaders. After attending one of the local schools, probably the free grammar school, where (on the evidence of his letters) he received a sound classical education, he eventually inherited the family business as one of the new generation of Leeds merchants whose aggressive methods of trading brought them wealth and extensive influence.

After his father's death, he lived for a time in the house in Pawdmire but soon built a more impressive dwelling opposite the east end of Boar Lane, where, according to Thoresby, there were holes cut in the wainscot to allow the free passage of cats, for which he had a 'strange inclination'.¹

¹ Ralph Thoresby, *Ducatus Leodiensis* (1715), p. 11.

In 1611, he and John Metcalfe purchased the office of under-bailiff from Henry Ambler and, some years later, he led the movement to raise £700 for the purchase of the lease of the bailiwick from Sir Arthur Ingram. As one of the group of nine townsmen who purchased the manor of Leeds from the corporation of London in 1629, he ultimately acquired three ninth shares and was one of those who conveyed five-ninths of the bailiwick (which was included in the sale) to feoffees to the use of the corporation of Leeds.²

A man of vision, piety and energy, it is on his munificent provision for the needy, for local education and for religion that his reputation rests. Having bought the estates of the Rockleys and Falkinghams to the north of the town, he built there, between 1620 and 1640, a new street, known as New Street or New-kirke-gate, later New Briggate, whose rents were assigned to the use of the poor; a row of almshouses to accommodate forty poor persons; a new building on an attractive site for the free grammar school; and the beautiful church dedicated to St John the Evangelist, acclaimed as 'a specimen of church architecture to which no other town . . . in England can produce a parallel'.³ By a deed of settlement of 1638, a house and seventy-one acres of glebe was vested in trustees to the use of the minister of St John's, together with an annual stipend of £80. The church was consecrated in September 1634 by Richard Neile, Archbishop of York, and a Puritan divine, Robert Todd, was appointed to the curacy. Harrison himself once remarked that he had laid out £6000 on these and other charitable causes, either specified or privately expressed.⁴

An apparently disastrous venture which caused him much disquiet began in April 1626 when he was commissioned as one of the collectors for the West Riding of the so-called privy seal loan. His share of the charge amounted to £725 6s. 8d., but the perquisites to which he was entitled — 10 per cent commission and personal immunity from assessment — were extremely attractive. Sir Henry Savile of Methley was convinced that the collectors had been given blank privy seals which they could fill in at their discretion, so favouring their friends and penalizing their enemies. Whatever the truth of the accusation, Harrison's initial exhilaration turned to dismay, for the poor response he received soured his relationship with

² WYASL, DB149/8, p. 118; Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, lxiv; ; W. G. Rimmer, 'The Evolution of Leeds to 1700', *PThS*, L (1967), 123; TNA, DL4/58/20; J. Wardell, *The Municipal History of the Borough of Leeds* (1846), App.

³ Margaret Hornsey, 'John Harrison, the Leeds Benefactor and his Times', *PThS*, XXXIII (1935), 111, 123–24, 126; T. D. Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete* (Wakefield, 1816), p. 61; Patrick Nuttgens, 'The Churches of Leeds', in *Religion in Leeds*, ed. by Alistair Mason (1994), p. 66.

⁴ Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete*, App., p.1; Hornsey, 128; Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 43–44; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 24.

Sir John Savile,* who would neither allow him his commission nor send him a discharge for the sum remitted (£425). Four years later, he fell victim to another of Charles I's money-raising schemes, the fines for distraint to knighthood.⁵

The Civil War was a catastrophe for the Royalist principal burgesses. Harrison, it seems, was an unwilling, even, niggardly, collaborator, whose faint-heartedness earned him the contemptuous observation of Adam Baynes that he was 'a timorous man' who, 'when my Lord Fairfax's drums did beat in Leeds . . . was troubled and afraid and went to Otley side'.⁶ Insignificant though his delinquency was, however, it provided his enemies, including two of the sequestrators for the wapentake of Skyrack, Francis Allanson* and William Marshall Snr, with a pretext for betraying and tormenting him. Desperate to preserve his fortune for the endowment of his charities, Harrison's vexatious battle with the compounding authorities ended in 1654 in a fine of £464 18s.⁷ Anguish, indeed, may be the explanation for his relentless pursuit of Roger Portington — also facing a crippling penalty — for the recovery of a substantial debt.⁸

Already bedridden by 1651, Harrison was by then a lonely, tragic figure. Widowed — his wife died in 1631 — his final years were riven by discord between himself and Robert Todd, who incited his Presbyterian clique to virulent denunciation of Harrison's loyalty to Episcopalianism. Sadly, his funeral on 8 November 1656 was held in the old parish church rather than in the church he had built. His remains were subsequently transferred from their temporary resting place, possibly the garden of his house, to St John's under a monument with an epitaph composed by the vicar of Leeds, Dr John Lake.⁹ The full length portrait presented by his nephew, Dr John Robinson, still hangs over his tomb.

HILLARY, Joseph (1583–1656) of the Headrow and North Hall Wood, merchant†

princ. burg. 1626; alderman 1631–32, 1639–40

s. of John H. of Calverley; m. (1) Gertrude —, d. 1640; (2) Margaret, sis. of Thomas Metcalfe wid. of George Killingbeck, an assistant of the*

⁵ APC, March 1625–May 1626, p. 421; Baildon, YASRS, LXI, 92–93; Wentworth Papers, pp. 250–51; WYASL, DB204/1, pp. 84–85.

⁶ WYASL, DB204/1, p. 35.

⁷ Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete*, p. 61; Hornsey, 113; YRCP, III, 51; WYASL, DB204/1, p. 13; Borthwick, Prob. Reg. XXVIII, fols 729v–730; P. G. Holiday, 'Royalist Composition Fines and Land Sales in Yorkshire, 1645–1665' (unpub. PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 1965, hereafter Holiday, thesis), pp. 60, 114–15.

⁸ WYASL, DB204/1, pp. 112–13.

⁹ Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 46; p. 28; Derek Hirst, 'The Fracturing of the Cromwellian Alliance: Leeds and Adam Baynes', *E(nglish) H(istorical) R(eview)*, CVIII (1993), 871n.; WYASL, DB204/1, pp. 103–05.

*corporation; s. Thomas, who predeceased him; m. Sarah Mitchell of Arthington; no surv. issue
bur. LPC*

The three brothers-in-law Joseph Hillary, Thomas Metcalfe* and William Busfield* were a formidable combination within the mercantile community of Leeds, whose members, adopting new and aggressive commercial practices, were encroaching successfully on the preserves of the older merchant houses of York. By 1612 Joseph Hillary was living in a rented house in the Headrow (which he may subsequently have purchased), where he remained until at least 1644, the year of the death of his elder son, Thomas, whom he had taken into partnership with him.¹ Sadly, the plague also carried off Thomas's young wife and Joseph's two remaining children, a girl, to whom Thomas had bequeathed his wife's wedding ring, and a boy who had received his brother's wedding suit and cloak. In the same year, Joseph married Margaret Metcalfe and subsequently built himself a fine house on his North Hall estate. His death without issue benefited the Metcalfes, in particular Thomas Metcalfe's nephew, Joseph, whose legacies included the two ninth shares in the manor of Leeds, yielding about £20 a year, which the alderman held at his death.²

Obliged to compound for distraint to knighthood at the time of Charles I's coronation,³ Hillary's later contribution to the King's cause — a single mounted soldier and a sum of money — may have been made under duress whilst the town was held down by a Royalist garrison. Indeed, he and Thomas Metcalfe appear to have tried to ingratiate themselves also with Lord Fairfax, but both were declared delinquent and Hillary not only represented his ailing brother-in-law before the Committee for Compounding but exerted himself indefatigably on behalf of John Harrison*.⁴

His childlessness enabled Hillary to establish himself as one of the more munificent benefactors of Leeds and Calverley. He devised properties in Park Lane, Leeds, in trust to provide stipends for the minister, parish clerk and schoolmaster of Calverley, and his charitable bequests, totalling £269, included the provision of legacies, doles and cloth to the most deserving poor of both towns, legacies to the vicar of Leeds and other ministers, and £20 towards increasing the stock of the Company of Clothworkers. Among those to whom he left money for the purchase of commemorative rings were Benjamin Wade* and John Harrison's nephew, Thomas Dixon*.⁵

¹ Thomas had loaned his father £270 (perhaps a legacy or part of his wife's portion) to provide stock for the firm, out of whose profits he received a yearly allowance of £40, Borthwick, Orig. Wills, Nov. 1644 (Thomas Hillary).

² TNA, Prob. 11/283, fols 115-17 (Joseph Hillary); WYASL, DB149/8; See also Kirby, *NH*, XXII (1986), 162.

³ Baildon, *YASRS*, LXI, 92.

⁴ *YRCP*, I, 137-39; WYASL, DB204/1, pp. 25, 89.

⁵ Note 2, above.

HODGSON, John (1601–51), of New Hall, Beeston, attorney† princ. burg. 1626; alderman 1638–39.

s. of Christopher H. of Cottingley Grange, attorney; m. Elizabeth, sis. of Sir George Radcliffe; sons Christopher, attorney; John, assistant 1661

Like the Bensons* and later, the Skeltons,* both minor gentry families, the Hodgsons produced several generations of attorneys. Christopher Hodgson was born in Stillingfleet, near York, but continued to hold a lease on the house in Morton where his ancestors had lived. After graduating from Pembroke College, Cambridge, he proceeded to Gray's Inn, from whence he set up a flourishing practice in York, living for a time in the fashionable Bootham ward. Dying in 1616 while his two sons and daughter were still minors, he exhorted his wife, Isabel, to see them virtuously educated and brought up in learning and the fear of God. So anxious was he for his children's welfare, especially to provide his daughter with an honourable dowry, that he felt constrained at the last to justify his ungenerous treatment of his wife, whom he admonished in his will thus:

And although I have not . . . so liberally dealt with my wife as in reason I ought to have done, her love and kindness to me considered, yet . . . I do heartily desire my said wife (without taking it unkindly at my hands) to rest content and be pleased with that part of my lands and goods which the law only doth and will afford her . . .¹

Isabel obviously fulfilled her duty to John, for he duly entered Trinity College and followed his father to Gray's Inn. He inherited the estate in Beeston which his father had purchased from Sir John Wood, and where he had lived before moving to Cottingley.

Alderman John's marriage was to influence the later course of his life, for his brother-in-law, an ardent Royalist, may have persuaded him to commit himself more deeply than his true inclinations warranted. He contributed to the Yorkshire Engagement and was heavily fined for so doing; yet he is said to have changed sides, perhaps because of the countervailing influence of his parliamentary relations, the Wests of Firbeck.²

His elder son, Christopher, was educated at St John's, Cambridge, and Gray's Inn, and the younger son, John, settled in Leeds as a merchant.³

¹ J. and J. A. Venn, *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, Part I, 4 vols, (Cambridge, 1922–27), ii, 285; G. C. F. Forster, 'York in the Seventeenth Century', in *V(ictoria) C(ounty) H(istory): City of York*, ed. by P.M. Tillott (1961), 163; Borthwick, Prob. Reg. XXXIV, fol. 268. He had moved to Beeston by 1601, Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p.75.

² T. D. Whitaker, *The Life and Original Correspondence of Sir George Radcliffe* (1810), p. 260; *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, ii, 384; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 215; J. T. Cliffe, *The Yorkshire Gentry from the Reformation to the Civil War* (1969), p. 87; Holiday, thesis, 388; *idem*, 'Land Sales and Repurchases in Yorkshire after the Civil War, 1650–1665', *NH*, V (1970), 81. His delinquencies were certified by John Dawson,* William Marshall and Francis Allanson,* sequestrators for Skyrack. See *YRCP*, I, 177.

³ *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, ii, 384.

HOPTON, Ralph (1583–1642) of Armley Hall, Esq†

princ. burg. 1626

s of John H (d. 1615); m. (1) Mary Nowell, d. 1614; (2) Isabel, dau. of Wm Musgrave; nephew, John Hopton alderman 1661–67*

bur. LPC

Of the old yeomanry, later gentry, of the parish of Leeds, the Hoptons were already living in Armley by 1379 when Adam de Hopton, franklin, was assessed for the poll tax at 6s. 8d.; thereafter they feature in records of medieval Leeds as landholders in Knowestrop and farmers of the manorial fishery.¹

Appointed a principal burgess in 1626, Ralph was the son of recusant parents, although he himself appears to have been won over to Protestantism. With Seth Skelton* and Alexander Cooke, the Puritan vicar of Leeds, he was among the feoffees entrusted by Sir John Savile* and his son, Sir Thomas, with maintaining a minister to serve the chapel founded by them at Headingley.² To the work of the municipality, however, he showed little interest and retired after two years.

To his brother, Christopher, he left an annuity of £20 out of property in Wortley, and to his nephew John Hopton* a legacy of 20s. His only son, Sir Ingram, slain at Winceby Fight in the year of his father's death, left an only daughter, Mary, as heiress both of the senior branch of the Hoptons and of her mother's family, the Lindleys of Leathley; he also left debts amounting to £4000 and an estate in wardship burdened with a sequestration fine of £600. The eventual recovery of the estate was due mainly to the resources of Mary's husband, Sir Miles Stapleton.³

JACKSON, Francis (1599–c.1646), of the Old Hall, Wade Lane, merchant

assistant 1626; princ. burg. c. 1630; alderman 1633–34

?s. of Thomas J. of Mill Hill; m. (1) Ann, dau. of Thomas Killingbeck of Allerton Grange; (2) Susan, dau. of Ralph Croft, sons Francis (d. 1661), merchant, Thomas (1620–47)*

Francis Jackson's origins remain elusive. He was almost certainly a great grandson or grandson of Christopher Jackson of Leeds (d. 1561), a prosperous clothier whose iconoclasm brought him into conflict with

¹ Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, lii, 3, 39, 44, 58n., 109, 250, 270, App.VI.

² Joseph Gillow, *A Biographical Dictionary of English Catholics*, 5 vols, (n.d.), III, 388; (but John Hopton was the father of Ralph not his brother, as there stated); Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, Nov. 1643; *Prob. Reg.* XL, fols 290–92; Cliffe, *Yorkshire Gentry*, p. 270. See p. 65 below.

³ *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, ii, 407; Cliffe, pp. 323, 343; 'LPC, Regs', III, *PThS*, VII (1897), p.168 and n.; *YRCP*, III, *YASRS*, XX (1896), 186 and n.

Marian authority. Christopher confided the guardianship of his young sons Thomas and Christopher, respectively, to Thomas Casson* and John Killingbeck,* and the continuing close friendship between the three families over several generations is demonstrated, first by Samuel Casson's* bequests to Francis, the latter's son Thomas, and Thomas's wife Deborah (daughter of John Jackson of Briggate); secondly, by Francis's marriage to John Killingbeck's niece.¹

At twenty-seven he was one of the youngest members of the corporation, yet his early promotion to burghal status, his receipt of a privy seal (which, like Ralph Croft,* he refused to pay) and, in 1630, assessment as one of sufficient means to support knighthood (though it is true the net was cast more widely on this occasion than, was customary) indicate a man of means and standing. He served his town as joint master of the Company of Clothworkers, as one of the founders of the House of Correction, as a leader of the movement for enfranchisement in the 1630s, and as the purchaser of a ninth share in the manor of Leeds.² He is credited with the building of the Old Hall, Wade Lane, which may be the property described in his son's will as 'a messuage, dwelling house or tenement and two closes of land in Leeds . . . late in the tenure of Alexander Falkiner, deceased', and designated by the testator for sale.³

Accused of delinquency, Francis died before any sequestration order was issued, but his younger son Thomas, who outlived his father by only a few months, was forced to compound on his own account. Like Ralph Croft,* Francis does not appear to have favoured his eldest son and namesake, for most of his property passed to Thomas, whose possessions, as recorded in his will, include seven messuages, with numerous closes and parcels of land in Leeds and Wakefield.⁴

*METCALFE, Thomas (d. 1650), of Red Hall, merchant†
 princ. burg. 1626; alderman 1630–31, 1637–38
 s. of John M. of Briggate, merchant, under-bailiff of Leeds
 younger br. of John M,* alderman 1661; m. — Tomlinson; no surv. issue
 bur. LPC*

The origins of the Metcalfes in Leeds are obscure, but the family appears to have been armigerous, and John Metcalfe Snr was certainly among the

¹ 'Test(amenta) Leod(iensia)', ed. by G. D. Lumb, *PThS*, XXVII (1930), 335–38; Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 28–29, 35; *idem*, *NH*, XX, 101–02.

² *APC*, March 1625–May 1626, pp. 423–32; Baidon, *YASRS*, LXI, 92; Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, 205, 220; *Old Leeds Charities*, pp. 41–42; WYASL, DB149/8. Knighthood compositions were in effect a tax upon the landowning classes, Cliffe, p. 140.

³ G. D. Lumb, 'The Old Hall, Wade Lane, Leeds, and the Jackson Family', *PThS*, XXVI (1924), 1–24.

⁴ *YRCP*, III, 108; *ibid.*, I, 47–51; Borthwick, *Prob. Rag.* XLVII, fol. 409.

leaders of the town in the period before its incorporation. There is indeed a suggestion that the family was a cadet branch of the Metcalfes of Nappa, who had their moment of glory during the brief reign of Richard III.¹

John Metcalfe's misdemeanours as under-bailiff led to the celebrated enquiry of 1620 into the administration of charity funds and the institution of the influential Committee of Pious Uses. Nevertheless the bailiwick was a valuable asset to bequeath to his younger son.²

By 1628, Thomas had built Red Hall, possibly at the time the most impressive and innovative dwelling house in Leeds; by the following year he had acquired the farm of the weighing of wool and tallow and a ninth share in the manor of Leeds. But it was as chief aulnager of the West Riding that he acquired a wider reputation as a gentleman 'of great estate', though a widely publicised verdict obtained by the Halifax clothiers in the exchequer court put paid to his attempt to impose a halfpenny increase on the tax payable on kerseys.³

With others of the new generation of buccaneering Leeds merchants, the Metcalfe brothers, Thomas, John* and Christopher, benefited from an increased foreign demand for good quality northern dozens, which they exported through the port of Hull. Through the marriages of their sisters Margaret and Elizabeth, respectively, to Joseph Hillary* and William Busfield* they forged powerful alliances which were to stand the test of the difficult post-war years.

Accused of contributing to the Yorkshire Engagement and of flight from Leeds in the wake of the royal army, Metcalfe was already a sick man in 1647 when he authorised Joseph Hillary* to compound for him, but, three years after his death, his case was still being argued by his brothers. His real estate was valued at the comparatively low figure of £39 10s. (John Hodgson's* was said to be worth £307 15s.4d), but the value of his personal estate in household goods and merchandise was set at £394.⁴

At his death Thomas's property included Red Hall and a stone quarry in a nearby close called 'Landes Lane'. He remained seised of the offices of bailiff and chief aulnager and had acquired also an interest in the manorial corn-mills. All these and other properties, including a moiety of the manor house and the capital messuage of North Hall, purchased from

¹ C. D. Ross, *Richard III* (1981), pp. 50–51; TNA, E150/232/10; TNA, Prob. 11/2/16.

² WYASL, DB213/52; G. C. F. Forster, 'Parson and People: Troubles at Leeds Parish Church', *University of Leeds Review*, VII, (1961), 243–48.

³ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 22; Hornsey, 124; H. Heaton, *The Yorkshire Woollen and Worsted Industries* (Oxford, 1920), pp. 197–203; M. W. Beresford, 'Leeds in 1628, A Riding Observation from the City of London': *NH*, X (1975), 38; R. G. Wilson, *Gentlemen Merchants: The Merchant Community in Leeds 1700–1830* (1971), p. 15; Kirby, *Documents*, p. 205.

⁴ YRCP, I, 139–40; *C(alendar of the) P(roceedings of the) C(ommittee for the) A(dvance of) M(oney)*, 3 vols (1888), II, 902, 933, 937.

John Falkingham, he devised and bequeathed to his elder brother John, though with precise instructions as to their descent. But John, too, remained childless and, a year later, Thomas, by then ailing and near to death, decided (or was persuaded) to make a second will, this time in favour of Christopher and his sons — the crux of the matter being the preservation of Thomas's wealth within the family. The ensuing protracted legal battle, in which John and Christopher, the latter supported by Margaret Hillary and Elizabeth Busfield (surprisingly, since the first will was more favourable to them), contested the will, ended with a verdict in favour of the earlier document. Since the younger generation of male Metcalfes appears to have predeceased John, the family suffered the not uncommon fate of extinction through failure of heirs.⁵

*SAVILE, Sir John (1556–1630), of Howley†
knighted by 1597, raised to the peerage in 1628 as Lord Savile of Pontefract.*

alderman 31 July to 29 Sept. 1626

s. of Sir Robert S.; the illeg. s. of Sir Henry S. of Thornhill

m.(1) Katherine, dau. of Lord Willoughby of Parham, o.s.p. (2) Elizabeth Carey of Aldenham, Herts.; s. Thomas, visc. s. & earl of Sussex

bur. Batley church

Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and Lincoln's Inn, Savile owed his position as one of the leading ironmasters of the period to his grandfather's determination to endow his illegitimate son, Robert, with as much property as he could release out of entail. Hence, Sir John succeeded to much of the Kirkstall Abbey estate, including the ironworks, the manors of Headingley, Bramley and Armley and extensive lands elsewhere in the West Riding, which by 1631 yielded, on a conservative estimate, a revenue of £2000 a year.¹ He also inherited Howley Hall, a grandiose house near Batley.

Described as 'extremely ambitious, arrogant, hot-tempered and unscrupulous', it was as a House of Commons man that he may be seen at his best, for he was also intelligent, articulate, opinionated and always ready with statistical evidence to defend the interests of the northern clothiers.²

⁵ TNA, Prob. 11/213, fols 208–09; *ibid.*, Prob. 11/216, fols 405–6; *ibid.*, Prob. 11/220, fol. 292; *ibid.*, Prob. 852, CP 410; Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 44.

¹ *D(ictionary of)N(ational) B(iography); The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland and the United Kingdom*, ed. by G. E. Cokayne, Vicary Gibbs and others, 13 vols, (1910–59), (hereafter GEC), XI, 459–61; Cliffe, pp. 276, 286, 459–61; *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, ed. by Joan Kirby, Camden Society 5th ser., VIII (1996), 220, 222, 337; *Chapters*, p. 247; *C(alendar of) P(atent) R(olls)*, 1563–66, 148.

² *The History of Parliament: the House of Commons, 1558–1603*, ed. by P. W. Heslev, III (1981), 351–58.

Removed in 1615 from the powerful office of *custos rotulorum* for the West Riding for abuse of his authority to 'satisfy his own ends', and replaced by Sir Thomas Wentworth, Sir John thereafter tried unsuccessfully to persuade the duke of Buckingham to use his influence to obtain Wentworth's dismissal. Thus were the hitherto private quarrels of the two men transferred to the public domain, for, in his bid for the supremacy of the West Riding, Wentworth set himself up as the champion of the smaller Leeds clothiers, who sought his aid against the incorporation of the town in the belief that it would place too much power in the hands of those who were already over-mighty. Savile, however, 'painted himself as a martyr' for the greater clothiers, in whose interest he obtained the charter of 1626. In recognition of his services, the corporation complimented him by incorporating the Savile crest, an owl argent, and supporters, two owls argent, crowned or, into the town's blazon of arms. During his short term in office as alderman he was permitted to discharge his duties through his deputy, John Harrison*. He remained nominally a member of the upper chamber until c. 1630, when he was replaced by Francis Jackson*.³

Between 1626 and 1628, Buckingham's favour secured for him appointment to the coveted post of comptroller of the household, the vice-presidency of the Council in the North, reinstatement as *custos rotulorum* and membership of the Privy Council. His downfall after the duke's death on 23 August 1628 was rapid, however, for it coincided with Wentworth's return to court favour. He died on 31 August 1630. His burial is recorded in a fulsome inscription by his daughter, Anne Leigh, on a monumental brass in Batley Parish Church.

Sir John's Puritan sympathies were expressed in his support of the radical vicar of Leeds, Alexander Cooke, and his appointment in 1617 as one of the original trustees of the advowson of the parish church. Two years later, he and his son gave land in Headingley as the site for a chapel, on condition that the feoffees would maintain 'good, learned and sufficient Minister or Clergymen'.⁴

SKELTON, Seth (d. c. 1646), of Osmondthorpe, gent. † ‡
 princ. burg. 1626.

s. of Thomas S.; m. Mary Ford of Hedley. sons William and Henry,* grands. Seth Soothill s. of his dau. Elizabeth, became governor of California.

Like the Hoptons of Armley and the Leghs of Middleton, the Skeltons were a minor gentry family of ancient lineage but comparatively modest means. Though originally settled in Flamborough, the Kirkstall Abbey

³ GEC, XI, 459–61; Cliffe, pp. 282–84; Hirst, *EHR*, CVIII, 869 and n.

⁴ *Old Leeds Charities*, pp. 13–14.

rent-toll of 1459 shows that by then they were then among the abbey's tenants in Osmondthorpe.¹ Minor gentry families were often drawn into seventeenth-century local politics through the Crown's natural mistrust of the chartered towns and their independent magistracies, and desire to place its supporters among the borough justices. Hence, Seth Skelton was appointed a principal burgess in 1626, but apparently displayed so little interest in civic affairs that, like Ralph Hopton,* he never assumed the chief office of alderman. As one of the original trustees of the advowson of Leeds Parish Church and a trustee of Headingley chapel, he was probably a gentleman of Nonconformist persuasion; nevertheless, his elder son, William, suffered sequestration as a Royalist and was forced to compound for the recovery of his estates,² whilst his younger son, Henry, married the daughter of a Royalist. As William died a bachelor, the family continued through Henry's descendants, of whom several achieved distinction in the Law.

SYKES, Richard (d. 1645), of Briggate, merchant*‡
 princ. burg. 1626; alderman 1629–30, 1636–37
 s. of Richard S. of Kirkgate, clothier; m. Elizabeth Mawson, d. 1645;
 sons John (d. 1618), Henry (d. 1654), of Hunslet Hall, Richard (d. 1652),
 rector of Kirkheaton, William (d. 1652), of Leeds, merchant; grands.
 Samuel Sykes*
 bur. LPC

Though contemporaries probably saw things differently, the Catholic martyr Edmund Sykes has achieved a more prominent place in history than his wealthy nephew, Alderman Richard.¹ The latter's grandfather, James, who, with his friends John and William Cowper, sheltered a recusant priest, adhered to the Old Faith, and there is evidence to suggest that the sympathies of the next generation lay in the same direction; but Edmund's betrayal, probably by his brother, James, must have caused, or been symptomatic of, a deep rift within the family, and Alderman Richard, for one, became wholeheartedly committed to the more radical tenets of Protestantism. A supporter of the contumacious vicar of Leeds, Alexander Cooke, he was appointed in 1617 one of the first trustees of the Leeds advowson — significantly, perhaps, only four of the original trustees were

¹ 'A Rent-Toll of Kirkstall Abbey', ed. by James Stansfeld, *PThS*, IV (1891), 4; *The Visitation of Yorkshire in 1584–85 and 1612*, ed. by Joseph Foster (1875), p. 169; G.G. Gamble, 'A History of Hunslet in the Later Middle Ages', *PThS*, XLI (1954), 235.

² Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 152; Cliffe, p. 270; Holiday, thesis, p. 390; Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete*, p. 27. See p. 63 above.

¹ George Broadley and A. Lonsdale, 'The Venerable Edmund Sykes of Leeds, Priest and Martyr', *PThS*, LIII (1970), 167–72; Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 31, 35–36; *idem*, *NH*, XX, 98.

to become future burgesses, though it was later to become virtually a sub-committee of the corporation.² As he escaped sequestration, he must have resisted the pressure exerted over its leading inhabitants during the Royalist occupation of Leeds. Two of his sons fell victim to political and religious intolerance, however: William, the youngest, became a Quaker and died in prison, whilst Richard, for whom his father purchased the rectory of Kirkheaton, was ejected from his living as a Royalist.³

By 1628, Richard's outstanding abilities had made him one of the biggest property owners in Leeds. In the following years, his wealth attracted a demand for a contribution to the privy seal loan and a fine of £60 (the highest in the county) for distraint to knighthood. As a member of the Committee of Pious Uses, a founder of the House of Correction, chamberlain of the Clothworkers' company and, like his grandfather, a governor of the grammar school his opinions and prejudices affected the lives of his humbler fellow townsmen. A certain inflexibility is indeed suggested by his presentment before the West Riding Justices for the summary dismissal of a maid servant, Margaret Strickland, on discovering that she was expecting an illegitimate child.⁴

His greatest service to the town was to take the initiative in the purchase of the manor of Leeds from the City of London, after which he and other shareholders transferred the major part of the manorial rights to the corporation.⁵ He died in his burgage house in 1645, the year of a terrible visitation of the plague, when the parish church was closed, the registers were discontinued, and the daily toll of the unnamed dead was reported to the military governor of the town. His estates in and around Leeds, together with his two ninth shares in the manor and his investment in mills and impropriated rectories and tithes, were carefully apportioned among his three surviving sons, so that each was provided with a competent settled estate.

Bequests to the vicar of Leeds, Henry Robinson, and to the Puritan minister of St John's, Robert Todd, were accompanied by a request that they visit him in his sickness to bring 'some spirituall comfort for my distressed soule'. It is perhaps significant that his will contains no reference to any of his fellow burgesses; though all but one survived him.⁶

² Kirby, *NH*, XX, 102–03.

³ *Ibid.*, 150; *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, iv; Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete*, p. 342; 'West Riding Quarter Sessions Records', ed. by J. Lister, *YASRS*, LIV (1915), 173; *YRCP*, I, 177.

⁴ Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, 72–205; *Old Leeds Charities*, p. 41; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 46; *APC*, pp. 423–32; Baildon, *YASRS*, LXI, 92; Lister, *YASRS*, LIV, 259.

⁵ Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, 205.

⁶ Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, Aug. 1645; Kirby, *NH*, XX, 99; *idem.*, 'A Man of Property: Richard Sykes, Merchant and Alderman of Leeds': *NH*, XXXVII (2000), 71–81.

WADE, Benjamin (1590–1671), of New Grange, merchant†† assistant 1626; princ. burg. by 1628; alderman 1632–33, not reapp. 1646; alderman 1661, mayor 1662–63
 s. of Anthony W. (d. 1616), of Kingcross, Halifax, yeo., and his w. Judith, dau. of Thomas Foxcroft of New Grange; m. Edith, dau. of John Shann of Leeds; no surv. issue
 bur. Headingley chapel

Fortune seems to have smiled upon Benjamin Wade. The eldest son of a well-to-do father, he was one of only three of the first corporators known to have attended a university. Soon after inheriting New Grange, which his father had purchased from Isaac Foxcroft, he rebuilt the house, placing over the north door the inscription which has survived as one of the very few remaining tangible memorials of the period:

If thou shalt find a house built to thy mind without thy cost,
 Serve thou the more God and the poor, thy labour is not lost.¹

The respect and affection accorded him is shown by his promotion to burghal status within two years of the charter and by the trust reposed in him by his friends and relations, including John Harrison,* Robert Benson,* Joseph Hillary,* and two assistants of the corporation, John Hargrave and Edward Killingbeck. The former entrusted him with the delicate task of keeping the peace between his wife and his sister (the latter a forceful lady), while Edward Killingbeck relied upon him to obtain from the Crown the wardship of his young son, on behalf of the boy's mother.²

Though apparently a Royalist, Wade was never penalized, in spite of an attempt to bring evidence against him, and although not reappointed to the reconstituted (but illegal) corporation of 1646, the restoration of Charles II enabled him to head a successful petition for the ousting of 'illiterate and ill-affected' persons from the corporation and the grant of a new charter which would provide for a mayor, aldermen and assistants. Appointed immediately to the aldermanic bench, his public career was crowned by his election in 1663 as mayor of his town — the only member of the first corporation to achieve the honour — in spite of a letter from the King to the corporation prohibiting his election because of 'the indisposition and weakness his great age renders him subject unto', and furthermore because he did not reside in the town.³ Between 29 September 1669 and his death

¹ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. XXXIV, fols 282–86 (Anthony Wade); *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, iv, 308; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 154.

² TNA, Prob. 11/202, fol. 207 (Benson); Borthwick, Orig. Wills, March 1648/9 (Killingbeck); Borthwick, Orig. Wills, March 1641/2 (Hargrave). See p. 53 above.

³ CPCAM, II, 100, 111; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 125–27; TNA, SP 29/28/71; *The Court Books of the Leeds Corporation, January 1662 to August 1705*, transcribed by J. G. Clark, *PThS*, XXXIV (1936), 33; WYASL, DB204/1, p. 263.

in February 1672, he attended all but one of the nine meetings of the court. After his death his nephew, Anthony Wade* was elected to replace him.

He left a rent charge of £10 a year to the use of the chapel at Headingley founded by Sir John* and Sir Thomas Savile on a site near the Shire Oak. On his tomb within the chapel Thoresby read his epitaph:

Truth, noble Thoughts and Vertue met in one
lye here in Shades, although his Life had none.⁴

2 THE INTERREGNUM 1646–1661

*Allanson, Francis (d. 1662) of Kirkgate, clothworker/merchant
alderman 1647–48, 1657–58, 1661–62
m. Bridget Carliel, poss. rel. of Simon C., holder of half-burg. 1612; no
surv. male issue
bur. LPC*

A zealous Presbyterian and wholehearted supporter of the sabbatarian ‘oracle of the Newe-churche’, Robert Todd, whose attempt to dominate the ecclesiastical life of Leeds during the Interregnum intensified the perennial rivalries of the Leeds élite, Francis Allanson, with Martin Iles* and John Baynes were satirized by their radical opponents, notably Adam Baynes and the physician Anthony Devereux as the ‘three active statesmen’ of the town after civic authority had been restored to the corporation in 1646.¹

Leeds having been awarded a Parliamentary seat as a result of the redistribution of 1653–54, the oligarchs decided, somewhat reluctantly, to support the election of Adam Baynes, although Allanson’s candidature was vociferously, if unsuccessfully, promoted by others among Mr Todd’s ‘auditors’, who were, however, dismissed in an official memorandum as persons of ‘inconsiderable importance’.²

Baynes’s radical policies, which included a campaign for a reformed charter providing for an enlarged corporation, and his anti-Sabbatarian views through which he expressed sympathy for the smaller clothiers who needed to work on Sundays, aroused the bitter and determined hostility of Todd, Allanson and their party, who sought to bring in the Puritan pastor

⁴ *Court Books*, p. 44; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, pp. 57–58, 151. See p. 65 above.

¹ WYASL, DB204/2, p. 68; Hirst, *EHR*, CVIII, 880.

² D. H. Atkinson, *Ralph Thoresby, the Topographer, his Town and Times*, 2 vols (Leeds, 1885), I, 34, 37, 41; Hirst, *EHR*, CVIII, 874; G. C. F. Forster, ‘From Elizabeth I to Ralph Thoresby’, in *Religion in Leeds*, ed. by Alistair Mason (1994), 35–37.

Elkanah Wales to preach ‘cunningly’ against religious radicalism, with an intended application to Baynes.³

The decimation tax of 1655–56 on former Royalists enabled Allanson* and Iles,* as sequestrators of the wapentake of Skyrack, to pay off old scores by striking at their opponents in the Corporation; thus they denounced as delinquents William Marshall the younger and William Stable, two of Baynes’s most prominent allies, who were also followers of Todd’s rival, William Styles, vicar of Leeds. But although during the period of unrest which preceded the Restoration Allanson earned the thanks of the Council of State for the diligence with which he forestalled a seditious uprising in Leeds, by 1659 mutual hostility may have caused him and other like-minded corporators to turn against the government to the extent, as reported by a Leeds source, of calling themselves ‘new reformed cavaliers’.⁴ By 1661, he had so far identified himself with the resurgent Royalists that he survived the municipal purge and was appointed to the aldermanic bench under the new charter of incorporation granted in that year. He died before the first election to the mayoralty took place, and so did not live to see the expulsion of Robert Todd from the living of St John’s.

He and his surviving son and namesake, who predeceased him, both occupied large houses in Kirkgate, where their respective widows continued to live. Like many a widow Bridget Allanson appears to have dabbled in usury and pawnbroking. Her will mentions valuable beds with curtains and valances, chests, chairs, tables, a livery cupboard and a great silver salt. To her beloved eldest granddaughter and namesake she bequeathed a marriage portion of £100, whilst three younger sisters each received 100 marks.⁵

*BROOK, Robert (d. 1653), of Hunslet Woodhouse
alderman 1649*

s. of John B. of Hunslet; m.?(1) Sarah —, d. 1627; (2) Mary Bates of Halifax, who m. as 2nd husband Alderman John Thoresby; s. Robert, who m. Mary dau. of William Fenton* of Woodhouse Hill, Hunslet*

The few known facts about Robert Brook substantiate the impression that in Leeds, as elsewhere, the victory of Parliament did not broaden the base of civic administration; those who were appointed to the reconstituted upper chamber in 1646 were men whose wealth and family connections

³. Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete*, p. 194; Hirst, 877, 884–86. Baynes’s desire was to reconcile the interests of the merchant oligarchy with those of the smaller clothiers of the mainriding: ‘In a commonwealth where all beare alike change all should have equall privileged’, *ibid.*, 876. See also p. 76 below.

⁴. Hirst, 881; *CPCCD*, V, 47; Atkinson, I, 37; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 126; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 265; Whitaker, *Loidis in Elmete*, p. 62.

⁵. Wardell, App. xiv, p. xcii; Borthwick, Prob. Reg. XLVIII, fol. 756.

made them as eligible as their former political opponents, and the resulting oligarchy was as tight-knit and exclusive as ever.

One of the few Leeds men to be caught up in Charles I's money-making scheme for the distraint of those considered eligible for knighthood, Robert Brook was evidently regarded as among the wealthiest inhabitants of the town, a reputation reinforced by his gift to Hunslet chapel of a valuable silver tankard, which like many another show of munificence, earned its author the esteem of his fellows and — desired consummation — the perpetuation of his name among the chapel's benefactors.¹

*DAWSON, John (?1597–1669), of Mill Hill, merchant
alderman 1646–47, reapp. 1661; mayor 1662–63
m. Sybil Jenkinson; sons John and Christopher (a John D. assistant
1669); dau. Rebecca who m. Thomas Idle
bur. LPC*

During the first seventeen years of the corporation's existence while civic power and patronage were the exclusive province of a few families, others with equal claims to leadership were waiting in the wings. Such was John Dawson, whose parliamentary sympathies, fanned by Puritanism and political ambition, brought him at length to political power as the first alderman of the reconstituted corporation of 1646, and as one of the four sequestrators for the wapentake of Skyrack.

A member of Robert Todd's congregation at St John's church, Dawson contributed towards the support of a lecturer there, and paid 7s.6d. for the privilege of occupying the alderman's pew.¹ A character of some inflexibility is perhaps implied by his sentencing the Friend Daniel Thackery of Holbeck to a term in the House of Correction at Wakefield;² for most magistrates balked at inflicting such condign punishment on their fellow townsmen, though it is true that as time went on and Quakers became increasingly feared and unpopular, the attitude of the authorities generally hardened. That Dawson was not politically so uncompromising is shown by his success in coming to terms with the resurgent Royalists in time to be among those nominated to the bench of aldermen under the second charter of 1661, even though he had signed the petition opposing the dissolution of the pre-Restoration corporation. In January 1662, he and John Metcalfe* signed an official precept prohibiting the eating of meat in Lent

¹ Baildon, *YASRS*, LXI, 94; 'Notes on Leeds Chapels', *PThS*, XXVI (1924), 164; 'A Thoresby Manuscript', ed. by G. D. Lumb, *PThS*, II (1891), 176; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 127.

¹ Wardell, App. xxiv, p. cliii; Atkinson, I, 41n.; *YRCP*, I, 50, 52; *WYASL*, DB, 204/2, pp. 65, 68; Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete*, p. 94.

² Wilfrid Allott, 'Leeds Quaker Meeting', *PThS*, L (1966), 5; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 126; Atkinson, I, 41n.

and on other legally prohibited days; in the following year he became the town's first elected mayor.

Having the good fortune to marry an heiress he died possessed of an extensive estate in and around Leeds.³

FENTON, William (?1607–75), of Woodhouse Hill, Hunslet, merchant princ. burg. by 1654; alderman 1658–59, 1659–60. probably s. of Abraham F. of Hunslet; m. Alice Tatham of York; sons John, Samuel, Abraham, Thomas, and William; grands.: William F. mayor 1733, 1747; dau. Mary, who m. Robert Brook bur. Hunslet chapel*

The Fentons were living in Hunslet as tenants of the Nevilles until the attainder of Sir John Neville for complicity in the abortive northern rebellion of 1569 removed the one family whose power and proximity could have inhibited the development of Leeds. The opportunity was grasped by a consortium of tenants, headed by the Fentons, Cowpers and Bayneses, whose eventual acquisition of the forfeited Hunslet estate assured the freedom of the town from future magnate interference.¹

Little more is known of the family in this period, save that they were strongly Presbyterian. William's son, Thomas, a close friend of Ralph Thoresby with whom he made a hazardous journey into Lancashire in snow early in 1698, may have been host to the conventicle in Hunslet, during which a warning of the approach of the constables enabled both Thoresby and the preacher, Dr Thomas Sharpe, to escape. Another son, William, perhaps destined for a professional career, was provided by his father with an income of £20 a year for four years to enable him to study at a university.²

Alderman Fenton's estate included a tenancy held of Lord Savile in Rothwell Haigh, where his grandson, James Fenton, established a dynasty of merchants who became colliery-owners, glass manufacturers and farmers of the Derwent navigation tolls. Indeed, no fewer than four branches of the family descended from the alderman achieved wealth and distinction in commerce, the professions and as country gentlemen.³

Not surprisingly, Fenton, who signed the corporation's counter-petition of 1661, was not reappointed under the new charter. Among the assistants, however, was William Fenton of Kirkgate, vintner (d. 1684),

³ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. L, fol. 257.

¹ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, pp. 175, 281; *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 243.

² Atkinson, I, 346 and n.; *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby* ed. by Joseph Hunter, 2 vols (1830), I, 389–90; Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LVI, fol. 278.

³ Ibid.; *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 243.

who after eighteen years as a useful council member was rewarded on retirement with the office of sergeant-at-mace. Two years earlier (1677), as one whose 'loyaltie and allegiance to his Matie hath beene Truly asserted' the council had recommended his appointment as postmaster for Leeds.⁴

HICK, Marmaduke (1619–96), of Boar Lane and Moor Allerton, salter alderman 1656–57, reapp. 1661; mayor 1666–67, 1681–82, 1694–95 s. of Richard H. of Nunnington; m. (1) Isabel Iles, d. 1653; (2) Anne, dau. of John Baynes of Leeds, merchant, d. 1661; (3) Frances, dau. of William Marshall Snr; no surv. male issue bur. LPC

The son of a substantial yeoman, Marmaduke Hick may have entered Leeds commercial life through kinship with the Idles and Thoresbys. Like other eligible young immigrants whose families underwrote their costly seven-year apprenticeships, he gained acceptance by the Leeds mercantile élite, and made the first of three advantageous marriages. Some time between 1641 and 1644, he moved from Briggate to the more fashionable Boar Lane, where his household was assessed for the hearth tax on ten hearths (one of the highest in the town), whilst in right of his third wife, he acquired the ancestral home of the Marshalls of Moor Allerton. By the time he was in his thirties success in business enabled him to devote time to civic affairs as a burgess in the Puritan-led corporation which ruled Leeds after 1646¹.

Though a member of Robert Todd's congregation at St John's church, his conscience was not so tender as to preclude conformity with the provisions of the Corporation Act, nor, as a magistrate, enforcement of the penal legislation against Dissenters through which Mr Todd was ejected from his living. His obvious talent for public affairs, pride in civic office and, perhaps, the persuasiveness of his family and kindred may have induced the deep sleep of ideology which enabled him to survive the civic purge of 1661. Thereafter, through assiduous attendance at council meetings, willingness to serve on select committees, audit accounts, negotiate leases on behalf of the corporation and relieve its exiguous finances by advancing 'greate sumes of money', he became one of the most respected and influential aldermen of the post-Restoration corporation, and thrice mayor — an honour that, with a mayoral allowance of only £20, must have left him out of pocket.² His absence from the civic procession that

⁴ TNA, SP 29/30/28; *Court Books*, pp. 59, 71–72.

¹ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 138; *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 15; 'Return of the Hearth Tax for the Wapentake of Skeyrack, A.D. 1672', ed. by John Stansfeld, *PThS*, IV (1891), 190, 200.

² WYASL, DB 204/2, fol. 68; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 124, 127, 132, 137n., 144.

accompanied the proclamation in Leeds of King William III and Queen Mary on the 19 February 1689, may mean that, like the town clerk, Castilian Morris, this second betrayal of a Stuart king lay heavy on his conscience.³

The inter-related, close-knit nature of the Leeds mercantile group to which Hick belonged, and the reliance placed upon reciprocal family loyalties and obligations, are reflected in the writings of one of its members. Facing an indictment for attending a conventicle, Ralph Thoresby sought advice from his 'cousin Hick' and his uncles, Michael Idle* and Samuel Sykes,* all three members of the Leeds bench which eventually acquitted him. But in another reference to his 'cousin', Thoresby records, though with typical reticence, a less harmonious aspect of kinship: the sour end to a day spent at the alderman's house after hot words were spoken and the family fell to bickering.⁴

Hick appointed his nephew, Seth Skelton,* and Ralph Thoresby to supervise the execution of his will, dated the 18 June 1696, that contained a bequest of £10 which the curate and warden of the chapel at Chapel Allerton were to invest, and distribute the resulting income yearly on Easter Sunday in doles to the poor of the district. His granddaughter, Dorothy Arthington, became the wife of Thomas Sawyer.*⁵

ILES, Martin (?1611–73)

princ. burg. by 1649; alderman 1654

m. ? (1) Anne Lodge; three surv. sons

Martin Iles the elder, gent., of Bramley drew up his will in February 1672 just over a year before his death. His eldest son, Martin, having recently died intestate, their father confided his remaining under-age sons, Thomas, Nathaniel and Henry, to the care of three 'very loving friends', of whom Thomas Dixon* was one. Either the testator or his deceased son could have been the alderman of 1654; in either case, the friendship with Dixon* means that memories of old, unhappy differences must have been forgotten.¹ Described in an official report as 'malicious and contentious among his neighbours', Martin Iles had been a thorn in the flesh of Dixon's uncle, John Harrison,* whose exasperation and dislike are expressed, with heavy irony and Biblical allusion, in a letter to Iles ending with the caustic assurance that 'when you write me any thing which

³ 'Extracts from the Journal of Castilian Morris', ed. by Thomas Brooke, *Y(orkshire) A(rchaeological) J(ournal)*, (1889), 160; A. M. Evans, 'Yorkshire and the Revolution of 1688', *YAJ*, XXIX (1921), 284; Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 191; Wardell, p. 61.

⁴ Atkinson, I, 212; Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 42.

⁵ Borthwick, Orig. Wills, 3 May 1697, Ainsty.

¹ Borthwick, Prob. Reg., LIV, fol. 215.

savours of Charity (an herb not usual in your garden) I shall with Celerity disperse Some part of it to others . . .’ According to information laid by an informer, Iles’s influence as sequestrator for the wapentake of Skyrack was available to those who were able to pay for it. He was accused, specifically, of obtaining a lease from John Harrison* in return for protection from prosecution. Harrison’s letter, indeed, infers that an offer was made but rejected, perhaps because Iles drove too hard a bargain.²

One of the triumvirate who effectively led the opposition to Adam Baynes’s attempts to reform the Leeds charter, their implacable dislike of the radical views of Baynes and his party was deeply embedded in a belief that their antagonist was an ‘atheist and schismatic’.³ Indeed, religion divided Leeds as it did many other communities. For example, in their counter petition of 1656 to the petition of the clothiers of the mainriding (sponsored by Baynes) for the overthrow of the existing charter, Iles and the oligarchs stressed only their own godliness and their support of Parliament in the Civil War; there was no expression of that affection for the Protectorate which had been woven into the clothiers’ petition. Furthermore Iles’s patronage of Thomas Woodruff for whom he obtained the sensitive postmastership of Leeds led to a storm over the latter’s alleged abuse of office. But as the fortunes of both parties had been largely determined by events at Westminster, so the final outcome of the struggle, swept away in the central crisis of 1659, emerged as a triumph for the oligarchs embodied in the Royal charter of 1661, through which their continued control over the clothing industry within the town and parish was secured.⁴

MARSHALL, William, ‘the elder’ (1591–1673), of the Upper House, Moor Allerton††

assistant 1626, reapp. 1646; alderman 1651; ousted or resnd 1656; reapp. alderman 1662

grans. of William M. of Moor Allerton, yeo. (d. 1608) s. of Thomas M. of Moor Allerton, yeo. (d. 1614); m. (1) Frances Lindley of Castleford; (2) Mrs Ann Gosling; daus. Ellen m. Henry Skelton,* Frances m. Marmaduke Hick.*

bur. LPC

The last direct male descendant of the senior branch of a numerous clan of substantial Kirkstall Abbey tenants in Chapel Allerton who in the

² Hornsey, *PThS*, XXXIII, 143–44; *YRCP*, I, 50, 52; *CPCAM*, III, 1327; Holiday, thesis, p. 60; *WYASL*, DB204/1, p. 13.

³ Hirst, *EHR*, CVIII, 877; Hornsey, *PThS*, XXXIII, 143–44; ‘Letters from the Stowe Manuscript’, *YAJ*, XIV (1898), 440–41.

⁴ Hirst, 877, 884, 880, 882–83. The charter was later declared to be spurious. See Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 125–26. See p. 68 above.

fullness of time provided the house with its last abbot, William Marshall inherited from his father, who had been one of the parties to the purchase of the manor of Chapel Allerton, the capital messuage of Moor Allerton, known as the 'Upper House', and a quarter of the tithe of corn there, together with the iron range, brewing vat, great ark and counter table designated as heirlooms by his grandfather. Having disregarded his father's testamentary instruction to pay his mother £5 a year towards the education of his two younger brothers, he was forgiven the accrued debt on condition that he did nothing to impede the removal of his mother's household effects, including silver, which she had bestowed elsewhere.¹

Named in the decree of 1617 establishing the body of trustees of the advowson of Leeds Parish Church, Marshall was also appointed a founder member of the influential Committee of Pious Uses and a trustee of the grammar school. As a reversioner of 1628, he was one of the parties to the conveyance in 1654 of five-ninths of the bailiwick to trustees to the use of the corporation. In the same year, he executed a feoffment of his estates to the use of his four married daughters, reserving to himself a rent from each of £20 a year and a life interest in his dwelling house which he conveyed to Frances, afterwards the wife of Marmaduke Hick.*²

An ally of Martin Iles* and the Presbyterian clique gathered around the minister of St John's in the struggle over the proposed reform of the Leeds charter and its implications for the Leeds clothing industry, he was appointed a sequestrator for the wapentake of Skyrack and played, one may think, a shameful part in the harrying of John Harrison.* Presumably, he concurred in the denunciation of his cousin and namesake, William Marshall 'the younger', a supporter of Adam Baynes and bitter opponent of Iles and his party, against whom they laid charges of delinquency.³

Like Francis Allanson* he was quick to identify himself with the resurgent Royalists; his expulsion or resignation from the council in 1659 enabled him to survive the municipal purge following the Restoration and he was appointed to the aldermanic bench under the new Charter of Incorporation granted in 1661. In his last years as a corporator, Marshall was not an assiduous attender of council meetings, nor did he undertake

¹ Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete*, p. 12; 'Charters Relating to the Possessions of Kirkstall Abbey in Allerton', ed. by F. R. Kitson and others, *PThS*, IV (1895), 48, 50, 53; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 136; *CPR*, 1391-96, 43; 'A Rent Roll of Kirkstall Abbey', ed. by John Stansfeld, *PThS*, IV, (1895), 3n.; Borthwick, *Prob. Reg.*, XXXIII, fol. 148; *ibid.*, XXXIX, fols 225-26; *WYASL*, DB 204/2, pp. 84-8; *Yorkshire Fines for the Stuart Period*, II; *YASRS*, LVIII (1917), 151.

² *Leeds P(arish) C(hurch) Regs*, II, ed. by G. D. Lumb, *PThS*, III (1895), p. 391; *Old Leeds Charities*, p. 7; Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, 206; Wardell, p. lviii; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 136.

³ Hirst, *EHR*, CVIII, 881, 883; *YRCP*, I, 155-57. His cousin, William Marshall 'the younger', of the Lower House, Moor Allerton, was one of the purchasers of the manor. See Kirby, *Documents*, p. 119. See p. 58 above.

any committee work. Strangely, perhaps, in a period when longevity was at a premium, he was twice defeated in mayoral elections, on each occasion by one of his sons-in-law.⁴

MILNER, Richard (d. 1659), clothier/merchant

alderman 1652–53

*s. of Marmaduke M. of Muker in Swaledale; m. Alice, dau. of William Jenkinson of Leeds; s. William m. Ruth Beaton, sis.- in-law of Paul Thoresb**

grands. William, mayor 1697

Like Marmaduke Hick* and the Thoresbys, Richard Milner was a scion of one of the many yeoman families, beneficiaries of the vast turnover of land following the Dissolution, who were sending their sons into the towns to ‘improve’ themselves by trade. As a young man of means and education his easy acceptance by the Leeds élite is evinced by his marriage into the Jenkinson family, whose Puritanism may have influenced his own outlook. He proved a loyal friend to John Harrison,* however, in spite of their opposing political loyalties. ‘I do assure you’, wrote Thomas Dixon* to his uncle, ‘you are much beholden to him Mr Milner for he is very jealous for you and to my knowledge hath spoken to severall of the commissioners very importunately on your behalf’.¹

Richard was living in Briggate in 1625, the year his son, William Snr, was born, though he may subsequently have moved to Boar Lane, where William lived before moving south of the river to Simpson’s Fold. William’s will and the inventory of his personal estate, made in 1691, provide us with a unique glimpse into a Leeds merchant household a generation or so before an expansion of trade brought undreamed-of affluence to mercantile families like the Ibbetsons, Ivesons, and Kitchingmans, whose ‘delicate’ houses were to be chronicled by Thoresby and illustrated by John Cossins. By contemporary standards, William’s house at Simpson’s Fold was comfortably, if austerely furnished. There were beds with curtains and valances, window curtains, chests of drawers and looking glasses, a clock, a picture, a screen, a spinning wheel and ten books, in addition to essential items such as tables, chairs cooking utensils and ranges. The house itself, comprising hall, scullery, parlour, two first-floor chambers and the closet which housed his collection of plate (there may have been other rooms unrecorded by the assessors) was one of two adjoining dwellings of which the second was occupied by William’s younger son the future mayor.

⁴ *Court Books*, pp. 1, 15–16, 19–20; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 141–42. In 1663, he was assessed in Chapel Allerton on seven hearths. See Wardell, p. cii.

¹ *Gentlemen Merchants*, pp. 14–15; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 216; WYASL, CB 204/1, p. 96.

Significantly, the value set on his furniture (£55 14s. 8d.) was only 11.2 per cent of his personal estate, estimated at £494 14s. 8d., the remainder being in merchandise with his factors abroad.² Thoresby, who was summoned to the house on 5 October 1691, afterwards recorded that 'The Providence of God . . . made a breach this day, the good old man dying suddenly of a palsy fit'.³

*MOXON, James (d. 1674), of Briggate, merchant
alderman 1650–51*

poss. s. of William M. (d. 1640)

m. (1) Alice — 1636; (2) Mary —, who later m. Alderman William Sawyer; sons James (1626–73), m. Margaret, dau. of Alderman John Dawson*, Joseph, John; grands. James (1652–94), merchant*

From the sixteenth-century subsidy assessments, it appears that a certain Robert Moxon and two younger men, John and Edward, probably his sons, were then living in Leeds Woodhouse. Both sons were listed in the muster roll of 1536 as mounted archers, whilst, in the same year, John was serving as deputy reeve of the manor by virtue of his tenure of 2½ bovates of former customary (now copyhold) land in Woodhouse at the customary rent of 16s. 8d. (6s. 8d. per bovat). He also leased about 50 acres of demesne land, some of it in partnership with the lawyer Thomas Hardwick, and his assessment for the subsidy of 1545–46 on goods worth £7 put him among the more affluent Leeds taxpayers. In the course of a deposition taken in 1560, Edward Moxon gave his age as sixty-six.¹

Whether John or Edward was the progenitor of William and James Moxon who shared a burgage in Briggate in 1628 is not known. James, who seems later to have occupied the entire premises, made provision for his wife to retain three 'convenient' rooms during her widowhood, whilst the rest of the house, together with the reversion of his wife's apartments was to be disposed of according to instructions given by his recently deceased eldest son and namesake, whose last will and testament were to be performed in every detail as though he were living. In 1663, father and son were each occupying a burgage house in Briggate, the former assessed

² G. D. Lumb, 'The Last Shop with Bow Windows in Briggate, Leeds', *PThS*, XXVI (1924), 399; *LPC*, II, 128; Borthwick Orig. Wills, Feb. 1691/2.

³ WYASL, DB 204/1, p. 95.

¹ 'A Subsidy Roll for the Wapentake of Skyrack of the 15th Henry VIII', *YAJ*, II (1873), 293; W. P. Baildon, 'Musters in Skyrack Wapentake 1539', *PThS*, IX (1899), iii; Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, 33,38,41,43; 'Lay Subsidy of the Wapentake of Skyrack 12 Feb. 1545/6', *PThS*, IX, (1899), 156; Edmund Wilson, 'A Leeds Law-Suit in the 16th Century', *ibid.*, 10.

on eight hearths, the latter on six; either could have been the alderman of 1650, though we may perhaps reasonably identify him as the elder.²

Of the alderman's public life nothing is known, save that, in 1659, he and John Thoresby* were joint masters of the Company of Clothworkers, presumably in accordance with the terms of its constitution drawn up in 1630, whilst his signature on the counter-petition of 1661 affirmed his defence of the town's charter, whose validity had become the subject of Royalist imputation.³

Writing to the unfortunate Mr Elkanah Wales who, as one of the dissenting ministers proscribed by the Act of Uniformity, had been forced to leave his home in Pudsey, Moxon informed him that his tenant had succeeded in appropriating the house and, with the help of the bailiffs, had removed the cleric's books, papers and furniture into the street, from whence kind neighbours had retrieved them.⁴

Moxon was not reappointed in 1661, but his grandson, elected an assistant in November 1676, declined the office, possibly because as a Dissenter he could in conscience neither receive Holy Communion nor take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy prescribed by the Corporation Act. Thus, as a victim of the not uncommon practice of electing Dissenters in order to claim the fines imposed for refusal of office, he was forced to pay £20 for exoneration.⁵

*ROUNDELL, Henry (1597–1671), of Meadow Lane, chapman
princ. burg. by 1654; alderman 1655–56
s. of Robert R.; m. Elizabeth —, d. 1672; no surv. s.; daus and coh
Elizabeth m. James Ibbetson; Susannah m. Alderman Christopher
Pawson*
bur. LPC*

A few small but telling hints must serve to delineate the insubstantial figure of Henry Roundell: a reference in the will of his son-in-law James Ibbetson to the effect that Samuel, his son and heir by Elizabeth Roundell was assured of a substantial inheritance, through the marriage settlement, 'good wit' and testament of Henry Roundell; in similar vein, Susannah's father-in-law Henry Pawson* claimed that Christopher was well endowed with lands and money. By 1740, Susannah's great-nephew, Henry Pawson* the attorney, must have enjoyed a sizeable rent-roll from his property in Leeds, which was valued, possibly for rating, at £363 1s. 6d.¹

² Kirby, *Documents*, 193,201; Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LVIII, fol. 332; Wardell, p. lxxxvii. James Moxon Snr was buried 10 May 1673. See *LPC Regs* III, p. 142; *Court Books*, p.45.

³ *Old Leeds Charities*, p. 39; *Court Books*, p.201. See p. 75 above.

⁴ 'Letters from the Stowe MSS', *YAJ*, XIV (1898), 437–38.

⁵ *Court Books*, p. 61. See p. 71 above and p. 81 below.

¹ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LIII, fol. 101; *ibid.*, XLIII, fol. 404. See p. 113 below.

Although not reappointed in 1661, Roundell was nevertheless pressed into service by the corporation three years later as auditor of the accounts of the overseer of the highways for the south division, where he lived in an impressive house in the newly fashionable Meadow Lane.²

The funerary inscription noted by Thoresby on Alderman Roundell's grave in the north aisle of the parish church, next to the Pawson family vault, may have been composed by, or with the approval of his daughter, Susannah. Though it is true that ostentatious piety, charity and humility through strength, qualities much admired in the leaders of provincial society, at least, were frequently attributed to the deceased, the pelican, a Pawson family device, is surely a personal touch:

Here rests a sage, a Pelican for Love,
To Wife and Children's Children like the Dove,
Harmless to all, an Israelite for Place
Once Alderman of Leedes, endu'd with Grace

The Poor Man's [word omitted] the Lame Man's Staffe, the Friend
Of all good Men, and Goodness to his End;
Tho' dead, yet speaks, because he liv'd to dye,
He dy'd to live with Christ eternally.

It is reassuring to learn from an entry in the court roll of the manor of Leeds Kirkgate-cum-Holbeck that the alderman was capable of, albeit minor, wrongdoing, for it records a fine of 3s. 6d. imposed on him for allowing rubbish to fester in a ditch.³

*THORESBY, John (1593–1661), of Kirkgate, merchant
alderman 1648–49*

s. of George Th. of West Cottingwith; m. (1) Grace, dau. of Francis Cloudesley of Leeds, d. 1646; (2) Mary, wid. of Alderman Robert Brook; sons Joseph, John Jr (1626–79), merchant, who m. Ruth, dau. of Ralph Idle of Bulmer, George, and Timothy; grands. Ralph (s. of John), the topographer
bur. LPC*

The eldest son of a prosperous yeoman, John Thoresby came to Leeds from the East Riding and married into one of the families of the old Tudor élite. He is first heard of in 1627 as one of the signatories to a petition from the tradespeople of Leeds and Halifax for exemption from the payment of ship money. His staunch Parliamentarianism drew him to such men as

² *Court Books*, p. 14; Wardell, p. xciii.

³ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 55; W.T. Lancaster, 'The Manor Court of Leeds-Kirkgate-cum-Holbeck', *PThS*, XXVI (1924), 135–36.

Francis Allanson* and John Dawson,* with whom he was associated in a vain attempt to persuade Elkanah Wales, a preacher with the extravagant zeal of a Savonarola, to minister in the town, with whom also he served as a sequestrator for S kyrack — a role of which his grandson, Ralph Thoresby, appears to have been unaware. His step-brother Ralph was slain at Wakefield, and two of his sons are believed to have taken up arms in the cause of Parliament, Joseph as captain of a troop of horse, and John in the force under the command of Sir Thomas Fairfax which captured Leeds on the 23 January 1643.¹

His grandson noted the inscription on the alderman's memorial in the choir of Leeds Parish Church:

Here lies lamented precious Dust,
A tradesman true, a Justice just

His eldest son, Joseph, may have inherited some family lands, for he settled in Sykehouse, near Snaith, married a local girl and was appointed a Justice of the Peace for the West Riding. Thus, it was a younger son, John, who, though taking a wife from the locality, joined his father in business in Leeds and interested himself in numismatics. He appears to have been an assistant in the pre-Restoration corporation, for he signed the corporation's counter petition of 1661.²

Sharing the change of feeling generated by the political chaos of the late 1650s, and encouraged by the offer of religious toleration, many Dissenters welcomed the Restoration, including John Thoresby Jr, who led a local movement to promote it. But the Cavalier Parliament, holding that religious freedom was incompatible with political stability, passed the Corporation Act, which not only effectively barred Dissenters from civic office but provided corporations with a new source of revenue from the practice of electing Dissenters in order to claim their fines for exoneration. John Thoresby Jr was among those who fell victim to this expedient, though in his case there is no record of a fine.³

Through the filial piety of his son he was commemorated in Leeds Parish Church, where he and his wife and eleven of their fifteen children were commemorated by a handsome wall tablet surmounted by a portrait bust by Samuel Carpenter of York, which is in the Lady chapel of the Victorian church that now stands on the site of its medieval predecessor.⁴

¹ A. S. Ellis, 'Notes on Ralph Thoresby's Pedigree', *PThS*, IX, 123–24; *Chapters*, p. 299n.; Atkinson, I, 4, 17, 20, 21, 23; *YRCP*, I, 50, 52; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, pp. 47, 72.

² *Ibid.*, p. 73; *Court Books*, p. 201.

³ Atkinson, I, 40; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 124, 126; *Court Books*, p. 27.

⁴ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p.47.

*THORESBY, Paul (d. 1673), of Kirkgate, merchant
alderman 1660–61*

s. of George Th. of West Cottingwith by 2nd marr.; m. Anne dau. of John Belton of Rawcliffe, whose younger sis. m. Alderman William Milner; s. Joshua, of Chester-le- Street*

Half-brother to Alderman John Thoresby,* Paul Thoresby's election as alderman in 1660 is said to imply that he welcomed the Restoration. Nevertheless, it fell to him to lead the corporation's defence of the charter under which it had exercised its powers during the past fifteen years.¹ The document, an *Inspeximus* made from the Patent Roll and authenticated by an official styling himself 'Chancellor', had been obtained to replace the original charter of 1626, whose disappearance was discovered shortly before the reinstatement of the corporation of Leeds in 1646. The Royalist party, led by Benjamin Wade,* Michael Hutchinson* and that recent recruit to the Royalist cause, William Marshall Snr,* now petitioned for a new charter that would replace the ten principal burgesses with a mayor and twelve aldermen. An earlier, abortive, attempt (1656) to obtain such a charter provided the Royalists of 1661 with a stick with which to beat their opponents, who, they inferred, had been moved on the earlier occasion by awareness of the illegality of their position. Thoresby and his colleagues, who denied any desire for change, prayed the King to preserve the charter, and accused the other side of dishonourable motives. On consideration, the Attorney General, Geoffrey Palmer, and the King's legal council held that the Leeds charter had been nullified on the suspension of the corporation in 1643 and, in consequence, not only the reconstituted corporation of 1646, but all subsequent elections to civic office were invalid. The King was therefore recommended to nominate an entirely new council.²

*THWAITES, John (1586–1671), of Allerton Gledhow, merchant
alderman 1653–54*

*s. of John Th. of Chapel Allerton (d. 1607); m. (1) ?Anne Dawson or Anne Crossfield; (2) Jane, dau. of Thomas Marshall; no surv. issue
bur. LPC*

A Richard Thwaites, assessed in Allerton Gledhow in 1524, may have been the first member of the family to settle there. Seventy-eight years later (1602), John Thwaites Snr was one of four parties to the purchase of the manor of Chapel Allerton with its appurtenances in Allerton Gledhow and elsewhere, to be held of the Crown, in chief, for the fortieth part of a knight's fee. His son, therefore, like other parish gentlemen, boasted

¹ *Court Books*, pp. 31, 200–01; Atkinson, I, 4, 40; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 70.

² Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 125–29. See p. 79 above.

the social advantages of an inherited estate and a sizeable house in the countryside.¹

Though now shrouded in obscurity, Alderman Thwaites, as one of the reversioners in the purchase of the manor of Leeds, and a compounder for the fine for distraint to knighthood, was in his day a man of consequence. He opposed the election of Adam Baynes as MP for Leeds in 1656 with some acerbity, though whether he supported the candidature of Baynes rival, Francis Allanson,* is not known. He seems to have resigned from the corporation almost immediately after the expiry of his term in office, perhaps because of some disagreement for which he was blamed.²

3 SECOND CHARTER, NOVEMBER 1661–DECEMBER 1684

THIRD CHARTER DECEMBER 1684–SEPTEMBER 1689

SECOND CHARTER RESTORED SEPTEMBER 1689

For the provisions etc. of the second and third charters,

see Kirby, NH, XXII (1986), 122–29, 151–52.

ALLANSON, Francis, see p. 69–70 above.

ARMITAGE, Richard (?1629–73), of the Upper Headrow, merchant assistant 1661; alderman 1662; mayor 1670–71

prob. s. of Richard A. of Boar Lane (d. 1629); m. (1) Mrs Dorcas Dawson, d. 1658; (2) Margaret —; sons John, Richard, and Robert, and three daus, minors.

Richard Armitage probably had the not uncommon misfortune to be born shortly after the death of his father, who must nevertheless have made such provision as enabled him to make his way quickly and successfully in business. We first hear of him in 1653, when on a business trip to the continent he was entrusted with an order for a buff doublet, ‘a little good cheese’ that would sell at a fair profit, and some tobacco, by a Leeds retailer to an English merchant trading in Flushing. The following year, he was one of a number of merchants who wrote to the Leeds MP, Adam Baynes, requesting convoy for a vessel due to sail from Hull, part laden with Leeds cloth.¹

¹ ‘Subsidy Roll for Skyrack [1524–25]’, p. 293; WYASL, DB 204/2, pp. 84–88; Wardell, p. ci. See p. 84 below.

² Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, 206; Baildon, *YASRS*, LXI, 92; Atkinson, I, 29–30; Hirst, *EHR*, CVIII, 874.

¹ *C(alendar of) S(tate) P(apers) D(omestic)*, 1653–54, p. 297; Atkinson, I, 33. In 1663, he was assessed on seven hearths. See Wardell, p. lxxxii.

The first assistant to be raised to the new aldermanic bench, where he replaced Francis Allanson,* Alderman Armitage missed only ten of the forty-seven courts held between 1662 and 1672, for which the names of those attending were recorded, and, like most of his colleagues, he served occasionally, as an agent of the corporation, as auditor, negotiator and supervisor of poor relief.²

His house in the Upper Headrow, with its garden and 'great orchard', was one of three valuable freehold messuages in Leeds which he devised to his two elder sons. His investments in quayside messuages in Newcastle-on-Tyne and agricultural properties in Birstall and Gomersall, together with his sixteenth share in a merchant vessel, were destined for sale to meet such debts as could not be satisfied out of his personal estate, and for the education and benefit of his children. His providence thus safeguarded his business from the heavy financial burdens that would follow his comparatively early death.

The guardianship and education of the children, who were to be brought up in learning and 'other callings as it shall please God to make them apt unto', were confided to Margaret Armitage, who was also to dispose of the accrued interest on the investment of their portions. As Richard had been at odds with the Committee of Pious Uses, his widow was charged with arrears of rent and legal costs, plus the payment of a charitable bequest of £25 from one John Casson that had stuck to the alderman's fingers.³

*ASKWITH, Caleb (1654–1715), of Briggate, linen draper†
assistant 1689; alderman 1697; mayor 1698–99
s. of Ralph A. of Briggate; m. Abigail -; no surv. issue*

An assiduous attender at meetings of the court, Alderman Askwith's first task as mayor was to repair with some of his brethren to the coffee house for an audit of the treasurer's accounts. In the same 'committee room', perhaps, he took part in some of the recurring discussions on ways and means of alleviating the corporation's exiguous finances.¹ With none of the sources of income available to the older chartered towns, such as property, trusts, fines for grants of franchise and guild forfeitures, corporators sought to enforce such rights as they possessed, including the right to levy toll. Having travelled to London to present the town's loyal address to King William, the council reimbursed Askwith the sum of £3 for the expenses of his stay at a local inn, the Duke of Leeds. Alderman Askwith's

² *Court Books*, pp. 1, 3, 42, 57.

³ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LIV, fol. 363; 'Committee of Pious Uses', 369, 374; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 133, 144.

¹ *Court Books*, pp. 165, 174, 192, 193, 197.

account of the cavalcade that accompanied the proclamation of the Treaty of Ryswick in Leeds on the 3 November 1697, once in Thoresby's manuscript collection, is now lost.²

Like Joseph Balmer,* Alderman Askwith suffered the loss of all his six children.³

*ATKINSON, Edward (1615–1676), of Briggate, mercer†‡
alderman 1661, dep. mayor Nov. 1661–Sept. 1662, mayor 1667–68.
s. of John A. of Scarborough, Westmoreland; m. (1) Elizabeth, dau. and
coh. of William Curtis of Burmantofts, d. 1651; (2) Elizabeth, dau. of
Richard Stable of Tanshelf, tanner; s. Edward, barrister, dau. Elizabeth
m. Marmaduke Cooke, vicar of Leeds; grands. Edward, mayor 1711
bur. LPC*

A first generation immigrant from the county yeomanry, Edward Atkinson was probably influenced by his father-in-law, a man deeply committed to local politics. William Curtis (d. 1676) had been elected assistant some time after 1626, but as a Royalist he was a victim of the purge of 1643. His political fortunes fell and rose again in direct contrast to those of his Parliamentary brother-in-law, William Marshall. One of the promoters of the Royalist petition of 1661, Curtis was reappointed to the lower house under the resulting charter, but declined promotion six years later, preferring to pay a fine that was reduced to £10 on his assurance that the corporation would benefit by his will.¹

Edward Atkinson's high standing in the community is attested by his appointment as deputy to the town's first mayor, Thomas Danby*. An assiduous attender at meetings of the court and the Committee of Pious Uses; a conscientious Justice of the Peace, whether in quarter sessions or at other times; a member of important select committees, and, probably, a participant in many informal — largely unrecorded — activities, from ad hoc business meetings in private houses to lobbying members of Parliament, to which Thoresby frequently alludes, it is clear that public affairs occupied much of the alderman's time. It is indeed likely that he was one of the three or four who formed a ruling group within the upper chamber.²

² Ibid., p. 180; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 542. In June 1718, the widowed Aldress Abigail Askwith took out one of the earliest fire insurances with the Sun Insurance Company on a house in Kirkgate, M. W. Beresford, *East End, West End: the Face of Leeds During Urbanisation 1684–1842*, *PThS*, LX, LXI, (1985–86), p. 453.

³ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 52.

¹ James Rusby, *History of St Peter's Church at Leeds* (Leeds, 1896), p. 193; Wardell, p. xlv; *YRCP*, II, 54–55; *CPCCD*, I, 72; *ibid.*, II, 145; *Court Books*, p. 214; Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LVII, fol. 170; see pp. 75–77.

² Wardell, p. 30; *Court Books*, pp. 15, 30, 42, 44, 53, 57, 203; *Old Leeds Charities*, pp. 19–20, 42, 47; Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, pp. 231, 233; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 140.

A successful man of business, Atkinson invested his profits in property — shops and houses in Leeds, and a country estate in Seacroft purchased from the Calverley family for £1219 — in secured loans at high interest, including a loan of £678 to two London merchants, and in a ninth share in the manor of Leeds, which he acquired from his kinsman William Marshall. His monetary bequests, totalling £1453, included small sums to four household servants, £20 for the purchase of a piece of communion plate for the parish church and £12 to be distributed in doles to the poor of Leeds and Holbeck. Among his bequests to his son were items traditionally regarded as heirlooms: an iron range, a brewing pan and vessels; a great Bible with silver clasps; one front and one back pew in Leeds Parish Church.³ The younger Edward also benefited by the will of his maternal grandfather, William Curtis, who died the same year as his son-in-law leaving his grandson a house and its contents (cash and plate excepted) with seven adjoining closes.⁴

Edward Jr was educated at Jesus College, Cambridge, and Gray's Inn, where he qualified as a barrister. At the Leeds sessions of 1684, he successfully defended Thoresby on a charge of contravening the Conventicle Act. By 1715, he owned the house at the east end of Boar Lane built by John Harrison*.⁵

*BALMER, Joseph (1646–88), of the Headrow, merchant† assistant 1673; alderman 1676, reapp. 1684; mayor 1679–80 s. of Edmund B. of Hull; m. Grace —, (d. 1685); s. Edmund predeceased him
bur. LPC*

The previous occupant of Joseph Balmer's house in the Headrow — where he was assessed for the hearth tax on eight hearths — was a certain Oliver Balmer, whose precise relationship to Joseph is unknown. The family's probable connection with the Balmers of Hull would explain Joseph's willingness to advance the fee of £6 13s. 4d. due from a former Hull merchant, John Skinner, on his election as an assistant of the corporation. Skinner came before the court merely to pay 'five golden guineas' to obtain enfranchisement, but the corporation disconcertingly seized the opportunity to elect him forthwith, and he was presented with the alternative of a comparatively small initial fee or a fine of anything from £20 to £40 for refusal of office.¹

³ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LVII, 150; Thoresby *Ducatus* p. 76.

⁴ Note 1, above.

⁵ *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, 53; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 11.

¹ John Stansfeld, 'Return of the Hearth Tax for the Wapentake of Skeyrack, A.D. 1672', pt. ii, *PThS*, IV, (1891) 180; *Court Books*, pp. 127, 134.

The fate of Alderman Balmer's children who died in infancy and were buried together in a single grave, is a reminder that although in general aldermen enjoyed a longer than average life-span, their children were as vulnerable as the children of less wealthy families to the appallingly high child mortality of the period.²

Balmer's work for the corporation included superintending the standardization of the corn measures (1675), negotiating the lease of the corn toll (1676), auditing Alderman Headley's account of moneys expended on the enrolment of the town's second charter (1679), and, after its surrender in 1684, investigating ways and means of meeting the cost of obtaining the third charter granted in the same year by James II.³

In response to an enquiry of 1680 into the regularity with which the corporation had 'applied the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and the requirement that every corporator receive Holy Communion according to the rite of the Church of England', Mayor Balmer and those of his colleagues who were then in Leeds were able to certify that the corporation had fulfilled its obligations to the letter.⁴

*BUSFIELD, William (1635–75), of Boar Lane, merchant†
assistant 1661; alderman 1669; mayor 1673–74
s. of William B. of Briggate, assistant 1626 (d. 1640); m. (2) Anne, dau.
of Hugh Currer of Kildwick, Esq.; s. William, of Rishworth Hall,
Bingley, bencher of Gray's Inn
bur. LPC*

With the advantages of a well-to-do father, whose fierce competitiveness as a young trader in the Hanseatic ports had alarmed and disconcerted the established merchant houses of London and York, and a mother, Elizabeth Metcalfe, through whom he was related to two leading mercantile families, the Metcalfes and Hillarys,¹ William Busfield made the most of his opportunities throughout his comparatively short life.² His success enabled him to move from Briggate to an even larger house in Boar Lane, and ultimately to purchase the Rishworth Hall estate for his son at a cost of £2000.³

² Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 54; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 140.

³ *Ibid.*, 144, 150; *Court Books*, pp. 51, 53, 54, 74, 99.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 74–75; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 151.

¹ He received a legacy from Joseph Hillary, TNA, Prob. 11/283, fols 15–17.

² He died aged 40, Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 53; *LPC Regs*: ed. by G. D. Lumb, XIII (1909), p. 29.

³ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 6; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 163; Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LVI, fol. 189 v. The house is illustrated by Cossins, *Printed Maps and Plans of Leeds 1711–1900*, PThS, XLVII (1960), Plate II.

As a corporator, Busfield did little committee work. The most notorious incident of his mayoralty occurred when the six officers sent by him to break up a conventicle were shamed into retreat by the wrathful preacher Cornelius Todd's declation that 'he could not but lament that, while in Rome under Nero, Paul could for three years be permitted to preach in his own house, he should not be allowed to preach in a Christian church and state'.⁴

William's only son adopted the life of a country gentleman and county magistrate for which he was destined; but his beloved four-year old daughter, Elizabeth, for whom he made such careful provision in his will, died within a few weeks of her father and was buried with him under a marble altar tomb on which were inscribed the words, 'Now thus, Now thus, Now thus.'⁵

*CALVERLEY, William (1642-99), of Briggate, attorney assistant 1676, dropped 1684, reinst. 1689; alderman 1690; mayor 1692-93
s. of Robert C. of Oulton, yeo.; m. Mary, dau. of Brian Kitchingman; sons Theophilus, and William who m. Mary, dau. of Thomas Kitchingman*; John C., mayor 1772, descended from William's brother Matthew (1652-1727)
bur. LPC*

William Calverley's father died possessed of an estate lying in closes and strips scattered over the disintegrating open fields of a number of parishes. As the eldest son, William came into the bulk of the property, but the land in Rothwell devised by Robert to his younger son, Matthew, for example, included seven roods of arable in the Middle Furlong of the Hope Field, fourteen roods in the Church Field and five 'several' selions in the Nether Furlong there.¹

William's success in the very personal business of the Law probably explains why he apparently had no time to engage in civic committee work — although he was fairly assiduous in his attendance at council meetings and at special sessions convened largely for the purpose of administering the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. He was, however, authorized to sue Alderman Headley* on behalf of the corporation for the recovery of a debt, and as attorney for the plaintiffs in a case concerning the corporation's failure to reimburse its agents, he was paid £5 18s., which

⁴ Atkinson, I, 46-48; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 148.

⁵ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 53.

¹ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LV, fol 111; Philip Rider, *History of Chesterfield*, II, (Chesterfield, 1984), 38.

probably included his fee.² Apparently considered politically unsound by the anti- Exclusionists, he was dropped from the corporation in 1684, but reinstated five years later on the restoration of the second charter. First nominated for the mayoralty in September 1691 but defeated by John Preston,* he won the election the following year against the veteran Thomas Dixon*. Thoresby, who was present at his mayoral feast, found the company so congenial that he lingered until late in the afternoon. In March 1693, the council decreed that Mayor Calverley be allowed £12 to provide entertainment for two barons of the exchequer, Sir John Turton and Sir John Powell, if they should visit Leeds on their way to Lancaster.³

As a lawyer, he seems to have attracted a share of the dislike in which the legal profession was generally held; in January 1699, for example, Samuel Barnard of Leeds was brought before the mayor, Caleb Askwith,* charged with uttering the defamatory statement that William Calverly was 'a Rogue upon Record'.⁴ Like most of his successful legal brethren, he used his wealth to build up a landed estate that included, in addition to his inheritance in Oulton, lands in Methley, Rothwell, Wakefield, Carlton and Purston Jaglin; valuable messuages in Briggate, Meadow Lane, Woodhouse, Gledhow, Holbeck and Hunslet, and leases of a number of fulling mills. Since their younger son was not yet twenty-four, William appointed his wife a trustee charged with applying the issues of the young man's inheritance and of other specified properties to maintain and educate him and his two young sisters, to pay her husband's debts and provide each of the girls with a marriage portion of £1000. Confident in her 'discreet and carefull' management, William forbade the children to marry without her consent, and gave her leave to sell property if his personal estate should prove insufficient to meet the demands made upon it. Between 1686, when the will was made, and William's death three years later, his daughter Anne married Edmund Barker, a future mayor, and her father added a codicil leaving her £100 'to by pinns withall or what else she pleases', free from the interference of her husband, to whom her marriage portion had been paid. In subsequent codicils, the gift was first rescinded and then restored.

To the poor of Leeds, Alderman Calverley left £100 in trust, the interest therefrom to be distributed annually under the supervision of the mayor, two aldermen and the vicar of Leeds. For some reason he directed that the Committee of Pious Uses was to have no part in the management of the trust.⁵

On his election as an assistant in June 1705, William's younger son courteously declined the honour and paid the resultant fine of £20.⁶

² *Court Books*, pp. 80, 142, 146.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 100, 146, 150, 152-53; Thoresby *Diary*, I, 232.

⁴ WYASL, LC/QS/1, p. 11.

⁵ Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, April 1700; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 58.

⁶ *Court Books*, pp. 192, 193.

DANBY, Thomas (c. 1631–67), of Thorpe Perrow and Farnley, Esq.† mayor Nov. 1661–Sept. 1662 (Edward Atkinson, deputy) grands. of Christopher D. (1582–1624); s. of Sir Thomas D. (1616–60) m. Margaret, dau. & coh. of William, 2nd s. of William, Lord Eure; sons Thomas and Christopher*

The Danbys had held property in Leeds since the fifteenth century, when James Danby acquired the farm of the Fowling. A recusant family, they are said to have attempted to escape prosecution by moving frequently between their northern estates and the south of England. The Catholic tradition was broken, however, when a bitter family quarrel resulted in the elder Thomas's removal from his widowed mother to the guardianship of a leading Protestant gentleman, Sir Christopher Wandesford of Kirklington, whose daughter he subsequently married. Sir Thomas had an influential career as Justice of the Peace and MP, and as deputy lieutenant of the county, an appointment he owed to his cousin, Sir Thomas Wentworth (later earl of Strafford). Through the ravages of a dishonest steward and his father's lack of thrift and business acumen (Christopher Danby died bankrupt and outlawed), Sir Thomas succeeded to a depleted inheritance, but, by 1643, he was said to be worth over £1000 a year and to be employing twenty-two servants.¹

His son Thomas, the future mayor, was born at Kirklington and served as a captain in the royal army. His wife, who was heiress both to her father and her cousin, Ralph, Lord Eure, brought him an estate which included a lease of the collieries at Catherthorne, held of the Bishop of Durham. Slain in a tavern brawl, his attackers, John Ogle and Thomas Jenney, were convicted at the Old Bailey of manslaughter, but claiming benefit of clergy they obtained remission of the sentence of burning in the hand, and were later granted the king's pardon.

Two years later, a warrant was issued permitting Thomas's two sons to go abroad for six years.² His widow presented a scarlet robe for the use of the mayor of Leeds, and the town added the Danby chief and mullets to its blazon of arms.³

DAWSON, John see p. 67–68 above.

DIXON, Thomas (1625–1711), of Little Woodhouse, mercer†‡ assistant 1666; alderman 1667, reapp. 1684; mayor 1672–73, 1693–94

¹ Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, 19 and n., 29 and n., 35, 69, 100; John Fisher, *The History and Antiquities of Masham* (1865), pp. 277–78; Cliffe, pp. 120, 186, 369–70.

² Fisher, pp. 277–78; A. Gooder, *The Parliamentary Representation of Yorkshire*, II, *YASRS*, XCVI (1938), 95; Rusby, *Leeds Parish Church*, p. 124; *CSPD*, 1667, 526; *ibid.*, 1668–69, 523, 652.

³ *Court Books*, p. 26; W. B. Barnwell Turner, 'The Arms of Leeds', *PThS*, XXVI (1925), 275–76.

3rd s. of George D. of Leeds, mercer; m.(1) a dau. of Michael Hutchinson d. by 1661 of Sheffield. (2) Ruth, dau. of John Bright, vicar. Eldest s. Bright (d. by 1711), Thomas, MA, master of Leeds Grammar School (d. 1712); daus Deborah, m. Henry Stanhope,* Ruth, m. John Rontree*, grands. Thomas and John (sons of Bright)
bur. St John's church

As a young man, Thomas Dixon exerted himself energetically in the struggle to obtain a reversion of the sequestration order imposed on his uncle, John Harrison*. Accompanied by three counsel, he attended the final hearing of the case before the barons of the exchequer, and heard, to his dismay, that because the judges disagreed on the verdict the sequestration would remain in force. Another of Harrison's friends, Alderman Joseph Hillary,* left young Thomas 20s. for a commemorative ring.¹

Whatever his beliefs, in the days when he and his father sat among Robert Todd's 'auditors' in St John's church, Thomas's later allegiance was given to Anglicanism: he married a clergyman's daughter and, in due course, saw his eldest son ordained priest.²

The fruits of his commercial success included his 'mansion house' in Little Woodhouse with its many closes, his estates in Potternewton, Cookridge, Rothwell and Pontefract, and his substantial rent-roll from properties in Kirkgate. From his uncle he acquired the share in the lordship of the manor of Leeds which Harrison* had purchased from Benjamin Wade,* and from the earl of Burlington he took a seven-year lease of the impropriated tithe of hay. To provide for his wife and any surviving younger children he invested a legacy of £300, to which he added a further £350, in a two-thirds share in the fee-farm rent of the manor, including the rents of the original sixty burgages.³

By the time he died, aged eighty-six, still apparently a member of the bench, Thomas Dixon must have achieved an almost unassailable position of influence in the corporation, not only through his knowledge of the institutional ropes, but also as a venerable civic patriarch whose presence lent authority to the magistracy (though on at least one occasion his forcefully expressed views failed to sway his colleagues). As negotiator, auditor, or treasurer, his tasks included the awarding of contracts to local craftsmen, including the plumbers and glaziers employed by the corporation to repair the parish church windows; treating with local bakers on the charge to be

¹ Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete*, App., pp. 6–9; TNA, Prob. 11/283, fols 115–17.

² WYASL, DB 204/2, p.68; *Alumni Cantabrigiensis*, I, i, 46; Rusby, *Leeds Parish Church*, p. 180; *Paver's Marriage Licences*, II, YASRS, XLIII (1911), 6.

³ Borthwick, Orig. Wills, November 1710; 'Lease dated 1687 of Hay in Leeds by the Earl of Burlington to Thomas Dixon', ed. by G. D. Lumb, *PThS*, XXIV (1919), 401; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 162.

levied for the right to bake on their own premises pending the rebuilding of the bakehouse; procuring the defence of the inhabitants of Leeds in a private suit for failure to repair Pontefract Lane; investigating the cases of two assistants against whom the corporation proposed to take legal proceedings; and acting as treasurer for the fund established to meet the expenses of an appearance to a writ of *quo warranto*. Like his colleagues he was expected to relieve the corporation's chronically embarrassed finances with frequent advances of cash. On one occasion the mayor's scarlet robe was delivered to him as security for a loan of 34s.⁴

Thomas's hopes, if any, for the future of his business probably resided in his two grandsons, Thomas and John. The latter, who was then serving his apprenticeship, was to be given his grandfather's legacy of £100 provided he achieved a satisfactory record. Otherwise the bequest was limited to 40s. Among the twenty-three persons who were to receive commemorative rings was Ralph Thoresby.⁵

DODGSON, John (d. 1720), of Allerton Gledhow, linen draper†† assistant 1685; alderman 1695; mayor 1696–97, 1710–11. s. of William D. of Leeds, clothier (d. 1694); m. Sarah, d. 1713; sons John, Richard, Benjamin; dau. m. Jeremiah Dixon, s. of Joshua Dixon of Heaton Royds bur. LPC

On succeeding to his father's estate, John Dodgson may have had difficulties with his step-mother, a seemingly forceful lady, to whom, and to her three sons by her first marriage, William Dodgson felt he had been over-indulgent.¹ The alderman's financial acumen seems to have been appreciated by his colleagues for he was soon appointed civic treasurer, and his committee work consisted largely of involvement in attempts to resolve the corporation's recurring financial crises. In 1705, for example, an advance of £5 from each of the aldermen was required to still the clamour of importunate creditors. Indeed, much of the court's time was spent on designs to make ends meet, including sporadic efforts to stem the tide of encroachments on the ancient privileges pertaining to the bailiwick. In one such foray, Alderman Dodgson was appointed to a strong committee authorized to investigate and, if necessary, take legal advice to recover the rights of the corporation to levy toll and to enforce the monopoly of baking. On 1 August 1696, having accompanied Mayor Iveson* on an inspection of the workshop of the goldsmith Arthur Mangey, who was on

⁴ *Court Books*, pp. 22, 23–24, 25, 28, 49, 53–54, 57, 67, 72, 93; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 140.

⁵ Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, November 1710.

¹ Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, April 1694.

trial for clipping the coinage, their evidence led to his conviction and execution.²

Upon his eldest son, John, the alderman laid the heavy burden of paying legacies amounting to £450 out of the issues of his property in Leeds, his investment in the Aire and Calder Navigation, and a debt of an unspecified amount owed by Thomas Hayes of Königsberg and Matthew Shifner of Riga. Filial discord is suggested by the conditions under which John might take possession of his inheritance: first, that he refrain for a period of eleven years from prosecuting or in any other way annoying his younger brother, Richard. Secondly, that he agree to grant a general release to his brother-in-law, Jeremiah Dixon, of all demands against him. A further £1255 in legacies was presumably paid out of the alderman's personal estate.³

The sound of the passing bell tolling for Aldress Dodgson in 1712 moved Ralph Thoresby to melancholy reflections upon his own approaching 'boundless eternity'.⁴

*FOXCROFT, Daniel (1631–91), of Weetwood††
alderman 1661, reapp. 1684; mayor 1665–66; resnd. 1685
s. of Daniel F. of Weetwood; m. Martha, dau. of Francis Layton of
Rawdon; eldest s. Samuel (1654–1713) ob.s.p.*

One of the many yeoman families to benefit from a land market flooded with sequestrated monastic estates, the Foxcrofts settled in Headingley c. 1550 when Daniel Foxcroft's great-grandfather, James (d. 1569), arrived from Sowerby. James's elder son, Thomas, inherited New Grange (later sold to Benjamin Wade*), whilst his second son, also named Daniel, was provided with lands in Weetwood. Here, the alderman possessed a sizeable house of ten hearths, comprising hall, kitchen, master chamber, hall chamber, dining room, parlour and several smaller chambers. Outside were the plough team, horses, pigs and cattle in the fields, stables and cattle shed, and the harvest of grain, bark and hay stored in the barn. In 1715, when Samuel Foxcroft's inventory was taken, the furnishings, valued at £89 10s. 6d., represented an unusually high 38 per cent of a total personal estate estimated at £232 18s. 6d., the remaining 62 per cent being in farming equipment and livestock.¹

Of Daniel's five sons, one was lost at sea and a second, taken prisoner by Turkish pirates whilst serving his apprenticeship as purser aboard 'the good

² *Court Books*, pp. 142, 144–53, 174, 193; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 137; 'Trial at York for Counterfeiting of Mr Arthur Mangey of Leeds, 1 August 1696', ed. by C.M. Atkinson, *PThS*, IX (1899), 207–28.

³ Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, June 1720.

⁴ Thoresby, *Diary*, II, 186; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 602.

¹ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 156; *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 15; Wardell, p. cv; Borthwick, *Orig. wills*, February 1715/16.

Shipp the *Adriatique*', was sold in Algiers for 700 dollars. His father, unable to raise the £350 ransom, sought help from his colleagues and friends. The corporation decreed a house-to-house collection in both Leeds and Hull, but before the sum could be collected the boy had met his death.²

Whether as a result of this tragedy or because he was out of sympathy with the anti-Exclusionists, he ceased to attend council meetings and, in June 1685, the mayor announced to the court that Alderman Foxcroft having refused to take the oaths of allegiance and Supremacy in accordance with the terms of the new charter, they should proceed to the election of a replacement.³

The tasks undertaken by Alderman Foxcroft on behalf of the corporation included negotiating a seven-year contract with the plumbers and glaziers required to repair and maintain the windows of the parish church (1667); arbitrating in a dispute between the sergeant-at-mace, Henry Conyers, and Thomas Hardwick, Esq., of Potternewton which had become the subject of litigation (1664), and acting as a receiver of documents pertaining to charitable uses that had been dispersed during the Civil War and which, according to a corporation decree, were to be placed in the safe-keeping of the vicar of Leeds (1669).⁴

The Weetwood estate descended to the alderman's grandson Francis Foxcroft, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, by whom it was sold in 1741.⁵

GIBSON, John (1649–1712), vintner
 assistant 1696; alderman 1700; mayor 1701–02
 m. Elizabeth —, d. 1682; ?s. John, of Liverpool
 bur. St John's church

We first hear of John Gibson in 1681 as a signatory to the town's carefully worded loyal Address to King Charles II for the Declaration in which, after the constitutional crisis caused by his determination to quash the Exclusion Bill, he proclaimed his continued belief in parliamentary government. In the following year, Gibson's wife and two small daughters died and were laid together in a single coffin that was later moved to the grave in the choir of St John's church, for which he paid £2 just before his own death.¹

² *Court Books*, p. 84; Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 24–27; *Annals of Yorkshire*, ed. by John Mayall, 3 vols (n.d.), I, 102.

³ *Court Books*, p. 109.

⁴ *Court Books*, pp. 16–17, 22–23, 29–30.

⁵ Thoresby Society Library, MS, SD VIII, 36.

¹ Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 150; Atkinson I, 354 and n.; James Rusby, 'St John's Church, Leeds', *PThS*, II, (1895), 35.

Almost ten years before his election to the corporation, the civic treasurer was directed to remit to Mr Gibson £12 advanced by him, possibly to assist in meeting the costs of the defence in a legal process concerning the maintenance of Pontefract Lane. Soon after his election, he was appointed to a select committee headed by the mayor, William Milner* which was instructed to meet in the coffee house for the annual audit of the outgoing treasurer's accounts. The following year, he and Thomas Lazenby* who had been censured for poor attendance, were candidates in a controversial election for a seat in the upper chamber. Despite Thomas Dixon's* vigorously expressed disapproval, Lazenby* was elected on a majority vote, and, perhaps in the aftermath of ill-feeling generated on this occasion, Gibson proffered his resignation to the council, which was refused — at the same meeting, Thoresby's notice of resignation from the lower house met with the same fate. Gibson's election to the bench by a majority vote took place in January 1700 and, at the next meeting of the court, Thoresby was present to hear him take the oath.²

Only two council meetings were convened during Gibson's mayoral year, both in September 1702. As early as the previous April, however, Thoresby was summoned to confer with Thomas Dixon,* who wished to solicit his vote in favour of one of the candidates in a forthcoming election for a seat in the lower chamber. Thoresby regretted the time thus wasted which he would otherwise have spent at prayer, but was deeply thankful when Benjamin Killingbeck,* brother of the vicar of Leeds, was chosen in preference to the 'proud and haughty' Thomas Pease.³

On Tuesday, 6 September 1743, there appeared in the *Leeds Mercury* notice of the sale, 'by the trustees of Mrs Gibson, late widow of Mr John Gibson, late of Liverpool', of 'a very good messuage' and more than 52 acres of good arable, meadow and pasture in Pudsey, once the property of Alderman John Gibson of Leeds.⁴

HEADLEY, Martin (1622–87), of Hunslet Lane, attorney†‡ assistant 1668, alderman 1672, reapp. 1684; mayor 1675–76 s. of Charles H. of Snaith; m. (1) Sarah Smithson of Snaith (2) Mary —; no surv. issue bur. Snaith Parish Church.

In a town where the mercantile élite included Dissenters like Ralph Thoresby and Thomas Fenton, towards whom their Anglican neighbours behaved for the most part with sympathy and leniency, Martin Headley, a

². *Court Books*, pp. 120–29, 164, 166, 171; Kirby, NH, XXII, 138, 139.

³. *Court Books*, pp. 12, 13, 69, 111, 114; Thoresby, *Dairy*, I, 361, 462.

⁴. 'Extracts from the *Leeds Mercury* 1742–1760', ed. by G. D. Lumb, *PThS*, XXVIII (1928), 72.

Tory, rabid anti-Exclusionist and relentless pursuer of Dissenters and political opponents, was an outsider. For example, his appeal against Thoresby's acquittal by the Leeds magistrates on a charge under the Conventicle Act led to the latter being subpoenaed to appear before the notorious Judge Jeffreys (no wonder he was one of the few men for whom Thoresby expressed dislike).¹ His petition for a *quo warranto* was an important factor in the demand for the surrender of the Leeds charter in 1684. (As once more a non-parliamentary borough, it is possible that this civic upheaval, with its inconvenience and expense, might have been avoided, but it rid the corporation of several dissentient voices.)² Ever eager to sniff out sedition, a chance visit to a Leeds coffee house enabled him to identify one of the Rye House conspirators — an achievement which may, however, have won him temporary approbation since the event occurred during James II's brief honeymoon with his subjects. His colleagues apparently found him so insufferable that, finding no other to whom he could entrust his papers, he confided them to Thoresby's friend Brian Dixon, who, on examining them after Headley's death, found his name on a list of marked men whom Headley intended to prosecute.³

Nevertheless his legal practice probably benefited from work that came his way through the corporation, the Committee of Pious Uses, and his office as steward of the manor. In 1686, however, he was threatened with court proceedings for the recovery of the unexpended balance of a sum of money advanced to him for expenses.⁴

He died possessed of property in Leeds and East Yorkshire which he devised to his 'cousin' Martin Hornby, whom Thoresby described as 'a little knave . . . who had picked several guineas out of Lord Dunblane and Latimer's pockets when at his uncle's house in Leeds.' Headley also acquired two ninth shares in the manor of Leeds and a third share in the fee-farm rent. He bequeathed to the vicar and parish clerk of Snaith, respectively, 20s. and 5s. a year in perpetuity for a commemorative sermon to be preached on Martinmas Day, and 20s. for distribution in doles to such of the poor as should attend the service.⁵

HICK, Marmaduke, see p. 73–74 above.

¹ Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 170–71; *ibid.*, II, 483; Atkinson, I, 214.

² *Ibid.*, 223n.; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 151; *Court Books*, pp. 99–100. See p. 83 above.

³ *The Memoires of Sir John Reresby*, ed. by Andrew Browning (Glasgow, 1936), p. 306n.; Atkinson, I, 215, 223n.; Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 200–01.

⁴ 'Minutes of the Committee of Pious Uses', 373; WYASL, Acc 5258/ bdlle 6; DB 149/8; *Court Books*, pp. 74, 79, 80, 116, 117. In 1677, having expended at least £30 of his own money to meet the costs of a law-suit on behalf of the Committee of Pious Uses, it was agreed that 'the rent of one of the Committee's houses be allocated to him over a period of 41 years by way of reimbursement'. See 'Minute of the Committee', 377–78.

⁵ Borthwick, Orig. Wills, January 1686/7 (vacancy).

*HOPTON, John (1622–?79), sometime of Armley Hall, Esq.
alderman 1661, ousted 1667
grands. of John H. of Armley (d. 1615), s. of Christopher H. (d. 1659),
nephew of Ralph H. m. (1) Susan, dau. of Ralph Croft,* wid. of Francis
Jackson*;
(2) Mary, sis. of Thomas Rymer, Esq., Historiographer Royal*

Of a cadet branch of the family, he is nevertheless thought to have lived for a time in Armley Hall, although in 1663 his household was assessed in Wortley on a comparatively modest four hearths.¹

As a corporator John Hopton showed no more interest in civic affairs than had his uncle (who retired after two years without having served as alderman). Hearing he had moved away from the district, the court served him with a warning of his impending dismissal unless he could give a satisfactory explanation for his continued absence. The warning was ignored and he was declared ousted. A John Hopton, Esq. died in York in December 1679, but whether this the former Leeds alderman is not known.²

*HUTCHINSON, William (1629–82), of Briggate, salter†‡
assistant 1661; alderman 1668; mayor 1672–73
s. of Michael H. of Kirkgate, chapman (1602–67); m. Sarah Green;
s. Joseph d. 1694
bur. LPC*

As the son of a man of position and proven loyalty, William Hutchinson was an obvious choice for appointment to the new corporation of 1661. His father had been an assistant of the first corporation, but as a delinquent accused of engaging in fund-raising for the King he was not reappointed when the corporation was reconstituted in 1646. Forced to compound for the redemption of his sequestered property, Michael Hutchinson's landed estate received a higher valuation, at £73, than the estates of Robert Benson,* Ralph Croft,* and Thomas Metcalfe,* his personal estate, assessed at £300 was also one of the more substantial. One of the leaders of the resurgent Royalists he supported Benjamin Wade's petition of 1661 for the grant of a new charter.¹

William Hutchinson's extra-curial activity was confined to membership of select committees established to consider the future of the bakehouse. As mayor, he presided over two meetings of the trustees of Leeds Parish

¹ Wardell, p. ciii.

² *Court Books*, pp. 26, 28, 44. For a note on the family, see Kirby, *PThS*, LVII, 270, also Colin Richmond, *John Hopton, a Fifteenth-century Gentleman* (Cambridge, 1981).

¹ *Court Books*, p. 199; *YRCP*, I, 51–53; *CPCCD*, II, 1004; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 94; *TNA*, SP 29/28, no. 71.

Church convened to bring the trust up to strength by filling the vacancies left by eleven deceased members.²

Only one of his ten children survived him, his son Joseph, to whom he devised estates in Buslingthorpe, Woodhouse, and Sheepscar, his houses in Briggate, his close 'behind Jacob's Well' in Wade Lane, and his one ninth share in the manor of Leeds which he seems to have conveyed to his brother-in-law, Thomas Dixon,* to hold in trust for Joseph. William's hopes for the survival of his son were disappointed, however, and, on the boy's death at the age of sixteen, the greater part his inheritance passed to William's brother, James; but three female beneficiaries, including Thomas Dixon's daughter, Deborah, later the wife of Henry Stanhope,* shared a reversionary interest in a 'brick house' in Briggate and a large close in Woodhouse. William requested burial in Leeds Parish Church 'as near to my children' as might be convenient.³ Undeterred by the penalty clause in her late husband's will that dispossessed her of her life interest in his estate if she remarried, Sarah Hutchinson afterwards became the wife of Henry Robinson, curate of St John's and great-grandson of John Harrison*.⁴

IBBETSON, Joseph, of Kirkgate, merchant†‡

assistant 1666; alderman 1676, ousted 1681

younger s. of James I. of Vicar Lane (d. 1661), and br. of James and Joshua; m. Mary Hardisty*

As younger sons with their way to make, Joseph and Joshua Ibbetson's success in business was nevertheless such that both had time to spare for public work, although Joseph's career as a corporator was curious. After a good record of attendance, both as assistant and alderman, until the end of 1678, he was present at only two meetings of the court between September 1678 and October 1681, and was concurrently neglecting his duties as Justice of the Peace. In September 1681, the corporation, exasperated by his refusal to answer repeated summonses or give any reason for his prolonged absence, took the desperate step of electing him mayor, whereupon he offered to resign from the bench on condition that the corporation repaid a loan of twenty marks that he had advanced to a contingency fund established in June 1678 to provide money for the repair of the town's gaol and to meet the costs of a legal process. Although his signed schedule of expenses had been duly entered in the *Court Book*, the corporation's attempt to levy a rate was unsuccessful and the alderman had not been reimbursed. His doubtless embarrassed colleagues responded to

² *Court Books*, pp. 30–31, 44.

³ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LIX, fol. 434. He died 25 November 1682, aged 53, Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 55.

⁴ Rusby, *Leeds Parish Church*, p. 309.

his offer by declaring him ousted for neglect of duty, but ordered that he be paid twenty marks which, however, they chose to regard as a refund of the fees paid by him on his election as assistant and alderman. Nothing is more revealing of the precariousness of the corporation's finances than the admission of its inability to execute the order until more fees from the same source had trickled into its coffers.¹

Possibly religious scruples lay behind Ibbetson's withdrawal: his wife had been indicted for attending a conventicle and, in 1684, a period of intense religious persecution, he himself faced a similar charge, which Thoresby predicted might result in a term of imprisonment.² His tender conscience, if such it was, did not, however, extend to his commercial practice: a few years earlier, the lords of the manor of Wakefield had lodged a bill of complaint in chancery accusing Joseph Ibbetson of illegal trading and avoidance of toll.³

IBBETSON, Joshua (1645–1700), of Kirkgate, merchant†† assistant 1676; alderman 1684, reapp. Dec. 1684; mayor Sept. Dec. 1684, 1685–86
younger s. of James I. of Vicar Lane (d. 1661); m. Mary, dau. of Christopher Brearey, Esq., Lord Mayor of York 1669; s. Joshua (d. 1705), m. Sarah, dau. of Thomas Kitchingman; dau. Mary m. William Milner*
bur. LPC

Although Joshua Ibbetson's marriage to the daughter of a well-to-do York alderman was of great advantage to a young man at the outset of his career, that of his elder brother, James, to the heiress Elizabeth Roundell laid the foundations of the landed wealth of the senior branch of the family, that was eventually to take them out of Leeds to Denton Park near Ilkley.¹ Nevertheless, his advance to the centre of civic power enabled Joshua to negotiate eminently desirable marriages for his own son and eldest daughter, though the younger Joshua (elected assistant in September 1701) died without male issue.

Joshua's mayoralty was interrupted by the municipal crisis of 1684 that ended with the grant of a third charter under which he was replaced by Gervase Neville,* a Royal nominee. Ibbetson was re-elected the following year, however, and, in 1688, he was appointed civic treasurer.²

¹ *Court Books*, pp. 63, 65–66, 81–82, 89, 90, 92, 143, 170–71.

² Atkinson, I, 48, 216.

³ LPC Vestry, Pious Uses Deeds, bdlc 3, no. 47.

¹ *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 20; *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, ii, 446.

² *Court Books*, pp. 97, 99–100, 111, 132; Atkinson, I, 319; Kirby, NH, XXII, 152.

In 1696, a Leeds cordwainer, George Norcross, a witness in the trial of the goldsmith Arthur Mangey, accused Alderman Ibbetson of complicity in Mangey's conspiracy to clip the coinage. Release from suspicion came only at the eleventh hour, when, on the eve of his execution, Mangey personally exonerated him.³

With William Rooke Jr, Ibbetson farmed the toll of the Aire and Calder Navigation.⁴

IDLE, Michael (1630–97), of Meadow Lane, merchant assistant 1678, reapp. 1684; alderman 1687; mayor 1690–91 younger s. of Ralph I. of Bulmer; m. Lucy dau. Anthony Ward of Otley; dau. Susannah m. William Cookson, three times mayor; sis. Ruth m. John Thoresby bur. LPC*

Still under age when their father died, Michael Idle and his brothers and sisters were confided to the care of their mother and eldest brother, Jeremiah. Of the five sons, only Thomas and Michael migrated to Leeds, where family money doubtless provided them with good apprenticeships and suitable marriages (the former married a daughter of John Dawson*). But it was probably through their sister's marriage to John Thoresby* that they gained admittance to the exclusive circle of the Leeds élite. The marriage of Ruth's son, Ralph Thoresby, with a granddaughter of Alderman Richard Sykes* linked the two families not only with the earliest period of the municipality, but also with the last years of the manorial borough.¹

Thoresby, who had great respect and affection for his 'Uncle Idle', turned to him and to 'Cousin Hick'* for advice before his appearance at the Leeds quarter sessions on a charge under the Conventicle Act. There were convivial evenings with his uncle and his beloved Aunt Lucy, who had been a second mother to him through childhood; and we have a glimpse of the two men conferring with Marmaduke Hick* and Gervase Neville* about the town's carefully worded loyal Address to King Charles that was shortly to be presented at court. By contrast, Thoresby deplored 'the great discontents, troubles and misunderstandings' between his two uncles, Michael and Thomas, and noted thankfully that by absenting himself from Hunslet Feast he had avoided the inevitable confrontation between the brothers, for whose reconciliation he fervently prayed.²

³ 'Trial at York for Counterfeiting', 226–27.

⁴ *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 141.

¹ James Rusby, 'Hunter's "Church Notes": St Peter's, Leeds; St John's, Leeds', *PThS*, IV (1891), 30; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, pp. 137–38; *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 15; TNA, Prob. 11/246; Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 35–47.

² Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 93, 129, 317; *ibid.*, II, 420–22; *Court Books*, p. 100.

Not an enthusiastic committee man, Alderman Idle was called upon only when corporation finance and litigation were under consideration. In December 1688, on the rumoured approach of a 'flying army of Irish and massacring Papists' moving northwards from the charred ruins of Halifax and Huddersfield, he was appointed quartermaster of a hastily organized troop of horse, part of a muster of about 7000 troops assembled at Leeds on Monday, 17 December. The alarm was raised that night on a report that Beeston was in flames: 'The drums beat, the bells were rung backwards, the women shrieked . . .'. There was the utmost panic and confusion. No enemy appeared, however, and in the early hours of the following morning Thoresby returned to bed.³

Alderman Idle's property in various parts of the parish included a shop in the Shambles, a one-ninth share in the manor of Leeds, purchased from Martin Headley's heir, and a lease of the toll of corn for which he paid £80 a year. On his complaint that the annual rate of £10 payable to the poor and highways out of the issues of the toll was too high, the corporation granted a reduction of £2, provided that he met the expenses of 'dressing' and cleaning the corn market.⁴

His uncle's death deeply affected Thoresby: 'he being a person of good natural parts and authority'.⁵

IVESON, Henry (1654–1713), of Black Bank, merchant†† assistant 1687; alderman 1694; mayor 1695–96, 1709–10 grands. of Anthony I. of Briggate, younger s. of Lancelot I. of Black Bank m. (1) Elizabeth, dau. of Richard Harland of Copmanthorpe; (2) Alice Wise of Burton Leonard; s. Edward, mayor 1728–29; grands. Henry of Norwich, MD

It is not clear what provision Lancelot Iveson made for his second son, Henry, aged twenty when his father died. Given contemporary opinion on the subject, the father would almost certainly have been at pains to ensure that the prospects of his younger children were commensurate with the family's dignity and standing. Under his will, each received a share of the issues, or proceeds of sale, of certain unspecified properties which were set aside for the payment of the testator's debts and to provide for his two younger sons and four daughters. Through the death of his childless elder brother, Anthony, in 1707, Henry succeeded to the house at Black Bank and to the valuable town houses and shops which Lancelot himself had

³ Ibid., pp. 126, 134, 139–40, 145, 188–91; 'Extracts from the Diary of Castilian Morris', ed. by Thomas Brooke, *YAJ*, X (1889), 163; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 154.

⁴ Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, April 1697; 'Minutes of the Committee of Pious Uses', 382; *Court Books*, p. 128.

⁵ Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 316.

inherited from his 'good and painfull father'; but by then Henry had made his own way.¹

He had broadened his interests commercially by exploitation of the coalmines of Knowstrop, Beeston and Holbeck, where he built up a large coal-merchanting business, and socially through his second marriage which brought him the extensive manor of Bilton and thus an entrée into the ranks of the landed gentry. Two years after his second mayoralty, he was appointed high sheriff of Yorkshire. Immortalized by Thoresby's waggish clerical friend, George Plaxton, as 'Glorioso, the son of Fleor' who had 'by his merits, Industry, and some other ways, arrived to the Favour of great men, and is supposed to be worth 400 purses . . .', Johannes Verelest's portrait of him, now in the Civic Hall, Leeds, depicts him in full-bottomed wig and voluminous robes, his expression redolent of self-confidence and success.²

To his two daughters, he bequeathed portions of £1500 each, to his wife an annuity of £100, his jewellery and silver, his coach, with a pair of horses of her choice, and a life interest in urban property, which made her the highest-rated landed proprietor in the town.³

KILLINGBECK, John (1617–96), of Headingley Hall††
assistant 1661, alderman 1673, reapp. 1684 mayor 1677–78; resnd 1686
?s. of Thomas K.; m. Beatrix, dau. of Samuel Burdet of New Grange;
s. John, BD, vicar of Leeds, Benjamin, assistant 1702
bur. Headingley chapel

Established in Chapel Allerton by 1379, the Killingbecks flourished and proliferated, spreading into Leeds, where they held manorial office, and its environs. John Killingbeck must have known his kinsmen, Edward Killingbeck of Allerton Grange and George Killingbeck of Leeds, both of whom were assistants of the first corporation. The latter, one of the few early corporators to receive a university education, was a stepson of Benjamin Wade* and first husband of Thomas Metcalfe's sister, Margaret. Both were Royalists and both died during the Civil War, Edward almost certainly of wounds sustained during the siege of Skipton Castle.¹

With such credentials, John Killingbeck was an obvious candidate for appointment to civic office in 1661, although he seems at first to have

¹ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LIV, fol. 222.

² Atkinson, I, 108n.; Thoresby Society Library MSS, Box VI, I; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 88; Thoresby, *Diary*, II, 54; 'Letters of the Revd George Plaxton, MA, Rector of Barwick-in-Elmet', ed. by E. M. Walker, *PThSXXXVII* (1945), 85, 95; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 162.

³ Borthwick, Orig. Wills, October 1713; WYASL, DB 204/2, p. 189.

¹ Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 42, 43, 47, 49; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 126; WYASL, DB204/1, p. 215; YRCP, III, 20–21; *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, iii, 16.

been an unwilling recruit. Censured in August 1664 for failure to pay the fine for non-attendance, he continued to absent himself until, on the 21 September 1672, the sergeant-at-mace was despatched with orders to collect the debt, either in cash or by distraint of goods. The threat of draconian action at last produced a result: in return for a satisfactory explanation Killingbeck was discharged of the debt.² His resignation fourteen years later on grounds of age and infirmity was accepted without the imposition of a fine. During his mayoralty, an abortive attempt was made to levy a parish rate to meet the cost of repairs to the town's gaol, and the expense of traversing an indictment due to be heard at the York assizes.³

The Revd John Killingbeck, one of a succession of distinguished post-Restoration vicars of Leeds, was admitted in 1667 as a sizar to Jesus College, Cambridge, where he afterwards became a fellow and tutor, and was ordained priest eight years later. Much admired by Thoresby, he was also commended by Archbishop Sharp of York as 'an Exemplar to the Clergy of his Province, both for Preaching and Practice'. From 1694 until his death in 1716, he was a prebendary of York.⁴

KITCHINGMAN, James (d. 1741), merchant

assistant 1696; alderman 1700; mayor 1701-02

grands. of John K. of Carlton Husthwaite, younger s. of Timothy K. of Balk; m. Mary, dau. of John Fenton of Woodhouse; s. James, mayor 1722 bur. LPC

(See also following entry.)

KITCHINGMAN, Thomas (1642-1713), of Meadow Lane and New Hall, Beeston, merchant††

assistant 1684; alderman 1686; mayor 1688-89, 1705-06

grands. of John K. of Carlton Husthwaite, elder s. of Timothy K. of Balk m. Mary, dau. of Thomas Driffild of York, merchant, s. Thomas, alderman (d. 1715); daus Sarah m. Joshua Ibbetson, Mary m. William Calverley Jr**

bur. LPC

The Kitchingmans probably migrated to Leeds *c.* 1630 when a certain Richard Kitchingman witnessed a deed of enfranchisement. By the 1650s, Brian and John, the sons of John Kitchingman, yeoman, of Carlton Husthwaite, were established members of the mercantile community, later to become assistants of the post-Restoration corporation. It was their nephews, James and Thomas Kitchingman, however, who raised the family

² *Court Books*, pp. 38, 40, 41, 115; Thoresby Society Library MSS, SD, VIII, 36.

³ *Court Books*, pp. 15, 38, 40-41, 63, 115.

⁴ *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, iii, 16; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 37.

to the premier commercial position in Leeds which it occupied during the last decade of the seventeenth century.¹

Thomas Kitchingman was the wealthiest Leeds merchant of his day. His economic activities, which included the ownership of collieries, were 'too wide to be contained within the usual woollen merchants' category', but like other merchant princes he accumulated urban and rural property, including the New Hall estate in Beeston which he purchased from the co-heirs of Christopher Hodgson*. By the end of his life, his rentals were bringing him additional income of around £700. An important element in his commercial success was his bill account with the third Lord Irwin, which, by giving him access to a regular supply of cash for the prompt payment of his suppliers, assured him the most competitive prices.²

His extra-curial work on behalf of the corporation was largely directed to the solution of financial problems, for example, finding ways and means of reimbursing Godfrey Lawson* and Castilian Morris for moneys advanced to meet the expenses of obtaining the third charter (1685); examining the accounts of the corporation with special reference to its debts (1686); considering the re-establishment of the corporation's authority over the Leeds toll (1701), and investigating the question of legal proceedings for debt against two assistants (1704).³

As his father's sole executor, Thomas Kitchingman Jr was charged with the payment of monetary bequests amounting to £3100, including £1000 to the former's widowed daughter, Sarah Ibbetson, and several large bequests to grandchildren, including £200 for the apprenticeship fees or university expenses of William Calverley* son of his daughter Mary. Moreover, in discharge of his father's charitable bequests Thomas was to pay each year on the feast of St Thomas the Apostle the sum of £6 to be distributed by the overseers of the poor, respectively, of Beeston, Holbeck and Balk; also £10 a year for the maintenance of the master and scholars of the Leeds Charity School. Soon after Thomas Kitchingman's elaborate funeral and burial in Leeds Parish Church, his family withdrew from the scene of their triumphs and returned to their ancestral home in Carlton Husthwaite.⁴

*LAWSON, Godfrey (1629–1709), of Lidgate and East Harlsey,
merchant††
alderman 1661, reapp. 1684; mayor 1669–70; resnd 1686*

¹ *Gentlemen Merchants*, pp. 15, 244–45.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 149, 150, 245.

³ *Court Books*, pp. 100, 114, 174–75, 190–91; Kirby, NH, XXII, 137–38.

⁴ Borthwick, Orig. Wills, March 1713/14; Rusby, *Leeds Parish Church*, pp. 175, 177; *Gentlemen Merchants*, pp. 20, 228; Atkinson, I, 267.

grands. of Geoffrey L. of Little Usworth, Co. Durham, Esq., younger s. of Edward L. of Brunton, Northumberland; m. Elizabeth, dau. of Joseph Watkinson of Ilkley; s. George, of East Harlsey bur. St John's church*

One of a number of well connected younger sons whom the rule of primogeniture forced into trade or the professions, Godfrey Lawson, although himself remaining in Leeds until his death, acquired a landed estate doubtless as the fruit of a long-held ambition to reinstate his son in the ranks of the county gentry. Through his impressive family connections, long and assiduous service as alderman and magistrate, and his ability to relieve the corporation's finances by substantial advances of cash, Lawson seems to have achieved a position of rare influence as one of the upper chamber's innermost caucus.¹

Most aldermen remained in office for life, but Lawson, with over twenty years service behind him, tendered his resignation in December 1686. The following year, he enrolled as captain of a regiment of foot under Lord Fairfax, an ally of the earl of Danby in the conspiracy which brought the reign of James II to an end, to whom the inhabitants of Leeds subscribed £300 'for the preservation of the King, the protestant Religion, our Laws and Libertys'.²

The most interesting component of his personal estate was a secured loan of £12,000. Such loans were attractive to the careful investor and indicative of the widespread practice of private usury amongst all classes of people. The securities were left in trust for George Lawson, his father not anticipating that the balance of his personal estate would prove insufficient to meet legacies amounting to over £6000. These included a life annuity of £10 to his 'faithful and careful servant', Jane Grayson, and 5s. to each of the poor inhabitants of John Harrison's almshouses whom he commended to his son, desiring that 'he would allways consider and be charitable to [them]'. Lawson was a trustee and benefactor of another of Harrison's charities, the grammar school, to which he added a library, a room for the use of the scholars where a fire was to be lit in winter, and a collection of books. His pride of ancestry is expressed in the inscription on his tomb: *Antiqua stirpe Lawsonorum in agro Dunelmensi oriundi . . .*³

¹ *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 245; Atkinson, I, 46n.; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 132, 137, 140.

² *Court Books*, p. 118; WYASL, DB 197/1, R.75; A. M. Evans, 'Yorkshire and the Revolution of 1688', *YAJ*, XXIX (1921), 284.

³ Borthwick, Orig. Wills, February, 1709, Prerogative (certified copy); WYASL, DB 204/2, p. 195; G. D. Lumb, 'Monuments in St John's Church', *PThS*, XXXIII, (1935) 308; 'Some Hitherto unpublished Letters of Ralph Thoresby', transcr. by Emily Hargrave, *PThS*, XXVI (1924), 376n.; Atkinson quotes Plaxton's typically mischievous comment on Lawson, the magistrate who committed Oliver Heywood to prison: 'He lived to a good old age, which God does sometimes make a distinguishing favour to those he loves. . .'. See *ibid.*, II, 157n.; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 147.

LAZENBY, Thomas (d. 1702), of Meadow Lane, merchant assistant 1694; alderman 1699; mayor 1700–01 s. of Thomas L. and his w. Dorothy, dau. of Hugh Scudamore and his w. Alice, neé Watkinson; m. Anne —; s. Scudamore*

One who apparently lacked the time (or, perhaps, the inclination) for public affairs Thomas Lazenby attended only five meetings of the court between September 1694 and September 1698 when he was called to account. Using the same tactics as those earlier employed to force Joseph Ibbetson's compliance, the council at its next meeting promoted Lazenby to the upper chamber, though only by a minority vote and despite the disapproval of the veteran Thomas Dixon*. Possibly because of their determination to prevent further backsliding, his colleagues soon afterwards unanimously elected him mayor.¹

Lazenby's death by shipwreck off the Dutch coast on 25 March 1702 caused Thoresby to reflect sadly on 'the care of that poor family (a poor meloncholy widow and many orphans and intricate accounts etc.)'. His son went into partnership with Thomas Brearey of York, and a grandson, Scudamore Lazenby, entered Jesus College, Cambridge in 1738, was ordained seven years later, and served for thirty years as vicar of Bramhope.²

MARSHALL, William, 'the elder', see p. 75–77 above.

MASSIE, William (1624–99), of Hunslet Lane and Meadow Lane, salter†‡ assistant 1679, reapp. 1684; alderman 1687; mayor 1689–90 prob. s. of William M. of the Headrow; m. Mary, dau. of Thomas Fenton of Woodhouse Hill, Hunslet; no surv. issue bur. LPC

A William Massie, probably the alderman's father or grandfather, was a copyholder in Leeds by the early seventeenth century. His assessment for the subsidy of 1627 (at the same figure as Robert Benson,* William Busfield* and Joseph Hillary*) placed him among the 'more honest and discreet men' of the town, and the family's status was soon afterwards enhanced by a grant of arms.¹

The future alderman's marriage to Mary Fenton, daughter of Thoresby's friend and fellow Dissenter, to whose house in Hunslet those dispossessed

¹ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, pp. 35–36; *Court Books*, pp. 166, 173; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 139.

² Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 359; Atkinson, I, p. 357; *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, iii, 58; *Gentlemen Merchants*, App. B.

¹ 'Subsidy Roll of the Wapentake of Skyrack', *PThS*, IV, 80; Rusby, *Church Notes*, 27.

by the withdrawal of the Declaration of Indulgence flocked to hear illicit sermons, corroborates evidence that within the commercial élites, generally, religious differences were seldom impediments to collaboration, friendships or marriage, especially when, like Thoresby's co-believers at Mill-Hill chapel, Non-conformists followed the advice of their clergy to behave with tact and circumspection.²

During Massie's mayoralty the whole corporation rode to Tadcaster to meet the new Archbishop of York, John Dalben, and his train, whom they escorted to Leeds and entertained at a banquet. The expenses of the feast were to be met by a special allowance of £10, but, as the churchwardens refused to authorise a church rate, the corporation had perforce to reimburse Mayor Massie out of its meagre funds.³

Sadly, his hopes of an heir were dashed by the early deaths of his eight children: from Mary, who lived for only twenty months, to Hannah, who died aged sixteen, they were victims of the high child mortality that left few families unscathed. Ralph Thoresby, who lost six children through smallpox, including his beloved daughter, Betty, confronted his surviving offspring with the stark reality that 'even when we are at home in the most perfect health, we know not what a day may bring forth; and we ought therefore to be in continual readiness for death and Eternity'.⁴ Massie therefore devised his real estate, comprising messuages, houses and closes in various parts of the parish, to his wife and her heirs; his bequests, amounting to some £477, included the interest on £10 towards the support of a minister at Hunslet chapel and the stipend of a schoolmaster who was to educate five poor children up to the age of thirteen. His Fenton relations each received £5 for mourning apparel; his father-in-law, Thomas Fenton, and Alderman Thomas Dixon* were among those who were left 20s. to buy commemorative rings.⁵

*METCALFE, John (1604–73), of the Red House, merchant†‡
alderman 1661, ousted 1670*

eldest s. of John M. of Leeds, chapman, br. of Thomas M; m. Ellen Bagnall; s. John Charles (b. 1661), no further ref*

A court verdict in his favour gave John Metcalfe possession of the considerable estate of his younger brother, Alderman Thomas Metcalfe,* including Red Hall in the Upper Headrow, where he was assessed in 1663 on nine hearths. Thomas's death in 1650 left his brothers and business partners, John and Christopher, with the further problem of accounting to the Committee for the Advance of Money for bonds worth £300 which

² Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 129; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 147–49.

³ *Ibid.*, 138; Atkinson, I, 273; *Court Books*, pp. 145, 151.

⁴ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 44; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 166.

⁵ Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, December 1699; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 57.

Thomas was said to be holding on behalf of certain contributors to the Yorkshire Engagement. The brothers admitted that such a sum had indeed reached the king's forces, but by theft from their agent, who was waylaid and robbed by a party of Royalists whilst on his way to Hull on the firm's business. Attempts to retrieve the stolen money had failed, but the bond which Thomas obtained from a royal official for its eventual restitution was eventually accepted by the committee, and the matter was dropped.¹

Having attended but two council meetings and put his signature to a precept prohibiting the killing and eating of meat in Lent and on other fast days,² John Metcalfe is heard of no more in the record of corporation proceedings until his colleagues took the improbable step of nominating him for the mayoral election of September 1669 in which he was, not surprisingly, defeated by Godfrey Lawson*. A year later, on a report that he had moved to his wife's native county of Staffordshire, he was declared ousted, but he remained a trustee of the parish church until his death. His widow afterwards married John Bright, the brother-in-law of Thomas Dixon.*³

*MILNER, William (1662–1740), of Simpson's Fold, merchant†† assistant 1695; alderman 1696; mayor 1697
grands. of Richard M. of Leeds, youngest s. of William M. of Leeds
m. Mary, dau. of Joshua Ibbetson*: s. William, cr. bart 1717, m.
Elizabeth, dau. of Sir William Dawes, bart, Archbishop of York
bur. LPC*

A man of energy, vision and outstanding business ability, the young William Milner spent five years in the early 1690s in the packhouse of his brothers, Joseph and Benjamin in Rotterdam, familiarizing himself with the European trade. He later told Ralph Thoresby that in four years he increased the value of his business from £5000 to £25,000. At the time of his mayoralty, when he had extended his interests into colliery ownership and his annual turnover was in the region of £80,000, Milner was the largest merchant in Leeds. He could therefore command high apprenticeship fees, make substantial secured loans to the Irwins of Temple Newsam, and use his privilege as deputy-receiver of the land tax to purchase cash assignments of cloth that would otherwise have been beyond the resources of his firm.¹

¹ Wardell, p. lxxxiii; TNA, Prob. 11/213, fols 208–09; *ibid.*, Prob. 11/216, fols 405–06; *ibid.*, Prob. 11/220, fol.292; *ibid.*, Prob. 8/52 CP410; Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 44; CPCAM, II, 902.

² Atkinson, I, 41n.; Wardell, pp. lxi–lxii; *Court Books*, pp. 34,44. He was also a signatory to a letter from the Leeds merchants to Adam Baynes, requesting his services for procuring convoy for a ship laden with Leeds cloth and due to sail from Hull. See Atkinson, I, 33.

³ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p.78.

¹ Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 155, 157, 161.

Meticulous attention to detail, especially in matters of finance, doubtless contributed to his success. In 1709, for example, as a result of a loan of £13,000 to the government on the security of the land tax, he felt obliged to seek out his debtors, including Thoresby, who, while quickly repaying the debt, protested mildly that he had expected his cousin to pay 'the horse charges att London' as he himself had paid for those on the road thither. Nevertheless, to Thoresby, Milner was the 'dear companion' of many travels. Together they shared the rigours of a winter journey to London, when a blizzard held them up in Grantham for six days. Once in the capital, they went to the House of Commons to present the corporation's views on the projected Cloth Bill to Sir William Strickland and Lord Downe, attended to private business and heard a three-hour sermon in St Paul's. Together they visited Temple Newsam to seek Lord Irwin's support for the erection of a white cloth hall in Kirkgate and to inspect a collection of books which their host had purchased abroad.²

As a Justice of the Peace for the West Riding and deputy lieutenant of the county, Milner achieved a wider reputation than most of his colleagues. Though not himself seduced by 'the patrician splendours and prospects of county society', he nevertheless purchased the estate of Bolton Percy and Nun Appleton Hall, the historic seat of Lord Fairfax, and soon afterwards paid £36 for a grant of arms: 'Your friend' wrote Geroge Plaxton to Ralph Thoresby, 'will be Earle of Northumberland'. For the realisation of his ambition to found a landed dynasty, however, his hopes rested on his only surviving son, whom he provided with an education commensurate with his prospects: Eton, Jesus College, Cambridge, and one of 'those academies and finishing schools for "gentlemen of the qualite"', the Middle Temple. On his marriage, the younger William and his bride were established at Nun Appleton, and with the creation of the baronetcy the alderman's ambitions were accomplished.

The crowning success of his mayoralty was the inauguration of the scheme for the navigation of the Aire and Calder rivers, in which Milner himself took the initiative. Having inspected the river and discussed with Thoresby and the engineer the possibility of making it navigable, he opened a subscription list with a contribution of £1100. In the same year, a less far-reaching, but still beneficial, decision introduced piped water into the town.³

² Ibid., 163; *Letters Addressed to Ralph Thoresby, FRS*, ed. by W. T. Lancaster, *PThS*, XXI (1912), pp. 195, 95; Thoresby, *Diary*, II, 12–16, 52, 61–62, 73, 75.

³ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. v; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 136, 173; Thoresby, *Diary*, II, 18–19; *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 226, 246; *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, iii, 193; *The Letters of Eminent Men Addressed to Ralph Thoresby*, 2 vols (1832), II, 261, 289; Lancaster, *Letters to Thoresby*, 147 and n.

He continued to live at Simpson's Fold, but, by 1725, had enlarged the building so that in Cossins's map it appears as a house with two wings. Here, after the close of business at three o'clock, he was able 'to entertain liberally the Archbishop of York, the county MPs and a host of country acquaintances from Lord Irwin to the humblest neighbouring curate'. His servants included his 'diligent and careful' niece, Mary Dawson, to whom he bequeathed £100.⁴

Family pride as well as conjugal affection may be detected in the generous provision William made for his wife, whose continued high standard of living was assured by her life interest in most of his Leeds estate, both real and personal, including his carriage and horses, but excluding his books (did he add to the collection of ten books he inherited from his father?) and his collieries in Beeston and Catbeeston. His monetary bequests, amounted to £8572, plus several annuities, including £2000 each to his two unmarried daughters and an identical sum to each as a marriage portion. A loan of £1500 to his son-in-law, probably to assist him by providing working capital, was to be repaid in legacies to the man's five children. To his grandson William he left £3000 worth of stock in the Aire and Calder Navigation Company.

Finally, William's benefactions, enumerated in detail on his monument, included the provision of a statue of Queen Anne by Andrew Carpenter to adorn the façade of the Moot Hall, a trust for the provision of a reader of seven o'clock prayers at the parish church, and an annual distribution of doles to 'such of the poor who had lived soberly and honestly'.⁵

Thoresby hints at calumnies against him: possibly there were suspicions of Jacobitism. He could not, however, have wished for a more eulogistic appraisal that was bestowed upon him by the author of his epitaph:

[His] eminent knowledge in that Business procured him ye regard, as his uprightness in ye exercise of it did ye esteem of all he dealt with . . . After a life spent in Piety towards God, usefulness to his Country, Tenderness and Affection to his Family, Kindness and Affability to his Friends and Acquaintances, and benevolence towards all men he died universally Esteemed, Beloved and Lamented.⁶

NEVILLE, Gervase (1639–96), of Holbeck, Esq. ††
mayor Dec. 1684–Sept. 1685; *de facto* alderman Dec. 1684, removed 1689

⁴ Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 158, 162; *Printed Maps and Plans*, Plate II; Borthwick, Orig. Wills, January 1740/1.

⁵ Ibid.; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, pp. 128, 250, 261; Atkinson, II, 52 and n.; Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 57, 451; Mrs Esdaile, 'Sculpture and Sculptors in Yorkshire', *YAJ*, XXXV, (1940–43), 285–86.

⁶ Lancaster, *Letters to Thoresby*, 235n.; Thoresby, *Diary*, II, 71; Whitaker, *Loidis and Elmete*, p. 57.

*grands. of Henry N. of Chevet, s. of Gervase N. of Beeston, Esq.; m. Dorothy, dau. of Francis Cavendish of Doveridge, Derbys., Esq.; sons Cavendish, fellow of University College, Oxford, who succeeded to chevet, and William of Holbeck, Esq., high sheriff of Yorks 1710; dau. Dorothy m. Henry Skelton**

As quartermaster-general to the duke of Newcastle, Gervase Neville Snr (father of the alderman) was excoriated by his enemies as 'a very cruel man in the county and a sore plunderer'. His attempt to avoid sequestration by declaring that his income was less than £200 was exposed by an informer as fraudulent.¹ His son's appointment as mayor of Leeds under the charter of 1684 points to the indispensable role of the gentry as Royal nominees on county and municipal benches in the political struggle which led to the peaceful accession of the duke of York as James II. In the heat of the Exclusion crisis, the corporation invited Gervase Neville to accompany Alderman Hick* to Windsor to present the town's carefully worded Address in reply to King Charles's Declaration of his continued faith in the parliamentary system. Four years later, after Marmaduke Hick* had refused the corporation's request that he should present the Loyal Address on the accession of King James, Mayor Neville was chosen in his stead.²

Because his position was invalidated by the restoration of the second charter in September 1689, Neville was removed from the bench, but offered readmission as an assistant on condition that he paid the fee of £6 13s. 4d. Thomas Dixon* and Michael Idle,* on Neville's behalf, then informed the corporation of his willingness to resume office provided the fees were waived, but the corporation refused to countenance such a precedent and his election was declared void.³

PAWSON, Christopher (1631-94), of Kirkgate, yeoman assistant 1665, reapp. 1684, elected alderman 1685 but refused grands. of Christopher P. of Kirkgate (d. 1632); s. of Henry P. of Kirkgate, clothworker (d. 1661); m. Susan, dau. and coh. of Henry Roundell, s. Henry,* merchant bur. LPC*

A hardy and prolific race, the Pawsons had the good fortune to win heiresses in the marriage market. Thus, as four consecutive generations employed this time-honoured method of increasing the 'livelode', the family rose steadily from the rough and ready household revealed in John Pawson's inventory of 1576 to a point in the mid-eighteenth century when

¹ *CPCCD*, II, 1750-51; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 182.

² Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 137, 144, 152, 150; Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 93; *Court Books*, pp. 88, 89, 91, 100, 104. He was accompanied by Henry Stanhope.

³ *Court Books*, p. 145.

their accumulated property placed his descendants among the highest-rated proprietors in Leeds.¹

Christopher's father may have given tangible support to the Royalist cause: the same informer who laid evidence against Benjamin Wade* tried also to incriminate him, though, as far as is known, with equal lack of success. Because his eldest son, Christopher, was well endowed by a wealthy father-in-law, Henry could provide generously for his eight younger children, to whom he devised property and £1000 in legacies.²

On economic and political grounds, therefore, Christopher Pawson was an eminently suitable candidate for civic office at the Restoration, though his long period of service in the lower house suggests that, like Ralph Thoresby, he had made known his disinclination for promotion. The opportunity to benefit from the heavy fine due for refusal of office was probably too much for the impecunious Corporation to resist, however, and Pawson was duly elected alderman in place of Godfrey Lawson*. He promptly tendered his resignation from the council, and though willing to submit to a reasonable fine, he flatly refused to pay the £20 imposed upon him, whereupon it was ordered that the sum be levied by distraint.³

His membership of several negotiating committees, his service as joint treasurer, his readiness to advance money to meet a variety of contingencies, and his regular attendance at council meetings are witness to a useful contribution to the work of the corporation.⁴

PAWSON, Henry (1656–1718)††

assistant 1682; reapp. 1684; alderman 1687; resnd 1688/89.

s. of Christopher P of Kirkgate; m. Sarah, dau. and coh. of Richard Beane of Ledston; no surv. issue

bur. LPC

Though barely mentioned in his father's brief will, we may assume that as Christopher Pawson's eldest son and the husband of an heiress Henry was well endowed. Indeed, father and son served together for four years as assistants and Henry was promoted to the upper chamber soon after his father's contentious resignation — the result, perhaps, of the council's determination to exact an aldermanic fine by one means or another.¹

In 1686, he was appointed to a select committee instructed to meet within a month for a detailed examination of the corporation's debts, and of ways and means of meeting them. Two months later, in response to

¹ C. B. Norcliffe, 'The Pawson Inventory and Pedigree', *PThS*, IV, 163–68; WYASL, DB 204/3, p.169.

² *CPCAM*, II, 1007; Borthwick, Prob. Reg. XLIII, fol. 404; p. above.

³ *Court Books*, pp. 118–19, 122.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 57, 101–02, 116.

¹ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. XLIII, fol. 404; *Court Books*, p. 120; 'Pawson Inventory', 168–69.

the committee's request for more time, it was decided that with Gervase Neville* and Michael Idle* as additional members, the committee was to consider also the possibility of yet another attempt to revive the trade guilds as a means of establishing a regular income from their enfranchisement fees, charges of various kinds, and fines for infringements of company regulations. Two years elapsed before the committee finally reported that the corporation's debts amounted to £152 13s. 9d. including a £50 loan from the Committee of Pious Uses (by now virtually a sub-committee of the corporation). Amongst other creditors were most of the aldermen, including Henry Pawson, to whom the sum of £2 10s. was owed. At the same time, seven corporators, including Alderman Pawson, owed between them £46 13s. 4d. in fines due on their appointments as assistants or aldermen. Whether the committee offered any positive proposals is not known.²

The circumstances of Pawson's resignation are shrouded in mystery. Last mentioned as absent from a meeting held on the 29 September 1688, the *Court Books* remain silent thereafter. It appears that as a Nonjuror he rendered himself ineligible for office.

His nephew and heir, Henry Pawson, attorney-at-law, was appointed an assistant in 1706. Five years later, his request for permission to resign was, according to Thoresby, the occasion for 'indecent brawling' between those who wished to fine him and those who did not. In the *Poor Rate Book* of 1740, Mr Pawson's property in Leeds was valued at £365 1s. 6d.³

PICKERING, William (1638–87), of Cross Flatts, merchant†† assistant 1665; alderman 1676; reapp. 1684; mayor 1678–79 grands. of Michael P. of York, s. of William P. AM, rector of Swillington m. Mary, dau. of Alderman John Weddal of York; sons William, and John bur. Beeston chapel

The Pickerings were a family with distinguished connections: William's uncle, Mark Pickering of Ackworth, was married to a granddaughter of Toby Mathews, Archbishop of York, and two of his aunts married, respectively, the chancellor of Chester and a brother of Sir John Bouchier. William himself was destined for commerce, but his younger brother may have been the James Pickering to whom a licence was issued in 1672 permitting the use of his house as a Presbyterian meeting house.¹

² *Court Books*, pp. 114, 116, 132–133.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 141; Thoresby Society Library, Thoresby MS, SD VIII, 36; Thoresby, *Diary*, II, 81–82; WYASL, DB 204/3, p. 169.

¹ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 211; *Court Books*, p. 170; R. M. Faithorn, 'Nonconformity in Later Seventeenth-century Yorkshire', 2 vols, (MPhil thesis, University of Leeds, 1987), II, 716. His father was among the signatories to the Protestation of 1641–42, WYASL, DB 204/1, p. 203.

A man of vision and intellectual attainment, Alderman Pickering was the author of a work entitled *The Marrow of Mathematicks*. As mayor of Leeds, he first introduced to the corporation a scheme for the navigation of the rivers Aire and Calder, urging the immense benefits of such an enterprise and offering, if necessary, to be the sole undertaker. His colleagues, whilst approving the scheme, were not prepared to face the financial risk, nor were his efforts to enlist outside support any more successful, in spite of the publication of an explanatory pamphlet. It was therefore left to a future mayor, William Milner,* with greater powers of persuasion perhaps, and an awe-inspiring record of commercial success, to bring the scheme to fruition.² It was as auditor and adviser that Alderman Pickering's financial expertise was of particular service to his colleagues.³

POTTER, Thomas (1643–98), of the Upper Headrow, merchant†‡ assistant 1673; alderman 1681; reapp. 1684; mayor 1682–83
m. (1) Jane, dau. and coh. of Thomas Strangeways, d. 1679; (2) Mary, dau. and coh. of Dr Langsdale, dau. Frances m. Charles Bathhurst of Clint; niece Anna m. Thomas, s. of Alderman William Sawer*
bur. St John's Church

In what appears to have been a singularly contentious election, Thomas Potter's promotion to the upper chamber was opposed by a significant minority of those present as being 'not . . . pursuant to His Majesties Charter'. Perhaps he was the victim of a political wrangle over the issue of Exclusion, though if Thomas had been a supporter of the bill he would hardly have been reappointed to office under the third Leeds charter. Having agreed at the next meeting of the court to stand down and re-submit himself, he was again elected.¹ As assistant and alderman, Potter was both assiduous in attendance at meetings of the court and in demand as negotiator, auditor, adviser and, in 1684–85, as a member of select committees concerned with the renewal of the charter. Generous with his purse, he advanced the large sum of £140 3s. 4d. towards the corporation's legal costs. Significantly, perhaps, he did not become a member of the Committee of Pious Uses until, as mayor, he was co-opted by the vicar of Leeds, John Milner, in accordance with powers vested in him by decree.²

In deep financial trouble, with a spendthrift brother and through his own disastrous involvement in Samuel Ibbetson's* rape-seed mill, Thoresby approached Alderman Potter, to whom his brother was indebted, with an offer of further security for the debt, and Potter obligingly offered to

² Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p.248; WYASL, DB 204/3, p. 201; *Court Books*, p.67.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 63, 93, 116.

¹ *Court Books*, pp. 90, 92, 100; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 150–51.

² *Court Books*, pp. 50, 55, 56, 101, 126, 128, 133–34; Thoresby Society Library, Thoresby MS, SD VIII, 229; 'Minutes of the Committee of Pious Uses', 384.

advance 'as many hundred pounds as he desired upon a single bond'; but Thoresby, although deeply grateful, was able to avoid taking advantage of the loan by recovering moneys due to him.³

In 1688, Potter served as a lieutenant in the hastily organized troop of horse for the defence of the town during the emergency, which appears to have been founded on nothing more than rumour based on wild reports of the approach of an army of massacring Irish papists. Seven years later he retired from the corporation without fine.⁴

Thomas's second wife, Mary, who may have preferred to remain a widow in order to use her wealth to benefit the charitable cause she had at heart, was the most liberal Leeds benefactor of the period, and her charity endowed with £2000 for the foundation of an almshouse for ten 'Ancient, Virtuous, Poor, Nessesitous widows' has survived to the present day.⁵

PRESTON, John (1648–1710), of Town End, merchant†† assistant Sept. 1684; reapp. Dec. 1684; alderman 1689; mayor 1691–92 grands. of Christopher P. of Leeds, mercer (d. 1639), s. of Joseph P. of Leeds, merchant (d. 1655); m. (1) Martha, dau. of Sir Benjamin Ayloff of London; (2) Ann, dau. of George Bacon of Furness; sons Croft, m. Frances, dau. of Benjamin Wade, John, and William bur. LPC*

Joseph Preston and his children were the fortunate beneficiaries of two trusts created by men who favoured them above others with prior claims. His maternal uncle, John Hargrave, an assistant of the first corporation who died without issue, caused a furore by making his sister Margaret (Joseph's mother) his executrix, and her children his residuary beneficiaries. During the ensuing legal battle with the testator's other near relations, Joseph and his brother, Benjamin, gave evidence of Hargrave's request to the latter to bring pen and paper to his shop in Briggate, there to draft the will which was ultimately accepted by the court as valid. In his will, Hargrave charged Benjamin Wade,* brother of his understandably aggrieved widow, with the delicate task of keeping the peace between her and her sister-in-law, Margaret Preston. The second windfall came when Joseph's father-in-law, Ralph Croft,* having provided his own son with an annuity, devised the greater part of his property to the children of his daughter Mary.¹

³ Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 324; Atkinson, I, 346–48.

⁴ Brook, *YAJ*, X, 163; WYASL, DB 204/1, p. 265.

⁵ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 29; WYASL, DB 204/1, pp. 120–23; Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 171; Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, Sept. 1699.

¹ Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 44. pp. 55, 68.

The three brothers, Joseph, Benjamin and Daniel, all merchants, must have had contacts with the mercantile community of London by the time John Preston made his spectacular marriage with a daughter of Sir Benjamin Ayloff, a governor of the Russia Company and the leading London participant in the Baltic trade, during the 1680s.² By 1685, John himself was trading extensively through Hull to the Baltic. By the time he died the family's prestige was such that his eldest son, Croft, who married a daughter of Benjamin Wade Jr, was promoted to the upper chamber within three months of his election to the corporation. An engraving of Croft's* fine house at Town End was used by Cossins as an embellishment to his map of 1726.³ It was, however, through John's third son, William, that the family joined the ranks of those who transferred their resources to the land and founded dynasties which 'filled Burke's pages with pedigrees that were undistinguishable from the rest of his compilations'.⁴

After an evening 'treat' at Alderman Preston's where he stayed late enjoying the good company, Thoresby was, as usual, assailed by qualms of conscience because of the hours spent in conviviality which should have been devoted to prayer and meditation.⁵

*RONTREE, John (?1639–1712), of Boar Lane, merchant††
assistant 1687; alderman 1697; mayor 1699–1700
m. (1) Mary —, d. 1690; (2) Ruth, dau. of Thomas Dixon, no surv.
issue
bur. LPC*

Possibly an immigrant, John Rontree's career doubtless followed the familiar pattern for those whose families could afford it: apprenticeship with one of the leading masters, a good marriage and a partnership. Alas, we learn from the irate clerk who recorded the interment of his first wife in the choir of Leeds Parish Church (she died during the smallpox epidemic of 1690), that the burial fees had not been paid.¹ His second marriage to a daughter of the influential Alderman Thomas Dixon* enhanced his prospects of civic promotion, although as an assistant he could have earned a good reputation for his assiduous attendance at council meetings. During his mayoral year, the corporation made one of its sporadic attempts to

² *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 16.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 247; *Printed Maps and Plans*, Plate II; Borthwick, Orig. Wills, March 1710/11; TNA, Prob.11/246 (Joseph Preston); Borthwick, Orig. Wills, May 1642 (Christopher Preston).

⁴ *Gentlemen Merchants*, pp. 20, 228, 246.

⁵ Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 346–47.

¹ *LPC Regs*, V, 360.

establish a freeman class by setting up a strong committee with power to admit approved persons to the freedom of the town. Mr Henry Stockdale of Bradford and Leonard Stables, a York haberdasher, applied, but balked at the high fees — £20 and two golden guineas, respectively, demanded of them. Nothing more is heard of Stables, but, after an order that his fine be levied by distraint, Stockdale accepted the corporation's offer of a reduction of £5, and was duly sworn.²

Alderman Dixon* left his son-in-law and daughter £7 to buy mourning, and the following year Ruth Rontree received a legacy of £50 from her mother. With no surviving issue of his own, Rontree created a trust out of his properties in Leeds, Armley, Wortley and Wennington in Lancashire for the benefit of his nephews, the sons of Thomas Rontree of Bishopton, near Ripon, one of whom was a Hull shipmaster, subject to the payment of his wife's jointure, and annuities totalling £75. Among the alderman's other beneficiaries was the Leeds charity school.³

ROOKE, William (1645–1710), of Boar Lane, merchant†† assistant 1679; alderman 1683; reapp. 1684; mayor 1683–84. s. of Gervase R. of Dransfield, Derbys., yeoman or gent; m. Isabella, dau. of Richard Newby of Leeds, merchant, the s.-in-law of William Busfield Snr; sons Sir William (1672–1743), mayor 1713–14, and Benjamin, merchant*

An immigrant from the prosperous yeomanry, William Rooke's marriage with a granddaughter of William Busfield* set the seal of acceptance by the town's commercial and civic élites. From Mill Hill, where he was living in 1672 when his son William was born, he moved to the Busfield's former house in Boar Lane, which he probably rented from Alderman Busfield's nephew, Sir William Lowther. By 1704, when he drew up his will, William and his wife had retreated into two rooms, the parlour and a chamber above, presumably to make way for his son's household.¹

To assist the corporation to meet its financial responsibilities, Rooke advanced upwards of £36 for such purposes as obtaining the third charter, defending the rights of Leeds traders, and satisfying the corporation's more pressing creditors. His presence on several important committees dedicated

² Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 78; *Court Books*, pp. 121, 122, 159, 163, 169, 171–72.

³ Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, 3 November 1710 (Thomas Dixon); *ibid.*, *Orig. Wills*, August 1715 (Ruth Dixon); *ibid.*, *Orig. Wills*, 8 September 1712 (John Rontree). John's widow afterwards married Henry Robinson, a great-grandson of John Harrison,* Rusby, *Leeds Parish Church*, p. 309.

¹ *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 247; *LPC Regs*, V, 32; Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. [6]; 1 Printed Maps and Plans, Plate II; Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, March 1710/11; Beresford, *East End, West End*, p. 88.

to the task of making ends meet doubtless enabled him to secure priority in the matter of repayment.²

William's even more successful son was fined £100 in 1705 for refusing the mayoralty, but took office eight years later, when he had the place of honour in the cavalcade that accompanied the proclamation of the Peace of Utrecht in Leeds in May 1713: after divine service in the parish church the cavalcade proceeded on its way, stopping first at the cross, then at Kirkgate-end, Boar Lane, Bridge-end, and the vicarage while the proclamation was read. In the van were the

constables on foot; mayor's younger son [carrying] a silk streamer with the Queen's cypher and crown and with 'peace 1713'. Then followed the scholars and other gentlemen's sons on horseback, which were then followed by Common Council-men, then Aldermen in theirs, 2 by 2 then the Town Clerk . . . then the sergeants-at-mace, in their black gowns, bearing the old silver mace and the new gilt one; the Mayor in scarlet gown, attended by clergy, gentlemen, merchants and a train of townsmen . . .³

Afterwards the celebrations continued with a great feast, bonfire and illuminations. In the same year he led a party, including the vicar of Leeds, John Killingbeck,* to Rawdon to wait upon Thomas Layton, a local philanthropist, who proposed contributing £1000 towards the provision of a much needed new church for the town — a project which came to fruition in the graceful church of Holy Trinity, built in Boar Lane on land abutting on the alderman's property.⁴

By 1732, Sir William had purchased the house in Boar Lane, where he died, wealthy but insane. The house, which had retained its Jacobean facade (in contrast to the new architectural style of the other fourteen houses illustrated in Cossins's map), was then demolished and replaced by one faced in Huddleston limestone, at a reputed cost of £4500.⁵

SAWER, William (1650–99), of Boar Lane, merchant†† assistant 1681; alderman Sept. 1684; reapp. Dec. 1684; demoted and re-elected assistant and alderman 1689; mayor 1686–87 m. Mrs Mary Moxon, wid. of Alderman James Moxon (d. 1703); grands. Thomas, mayor 1726 bur. LPC*

² *Court Books*, pp. 71, 93, 95–96, 101, 122, 128, 133, 139, 192–93, 197–98.

³ Hunter, II, 189–90.

⁴ Kirby, NH, XXII, 141; Terry Friedman, *Church Architecture in Leeds 1700–1799*, PThS, 2nd ser., VII (1996), pp. 58, 61, 68.

⁵ *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 20; WYASL, DB 204/3, p. 163; Beresford, *East End, West End*, pp. 39, 41n., 72.

Possibly, a son of Robert Sawer, who, with James Moxon* his wife's first husband, was a member of Robert Todd's congregation at St John's church, William Sawer was living in Boar Lane by 1677. Like William Rooke,* whom he appointed an administrator of part of his personal estate, William devised to his wife, provided she remained a widow, a life interest in the chamber over the 'new parlour' in his dwelling house, lodging for her servant in one of the garrets, the use of the kitchen for 'dressing her meat', a cellar for storage, and free access at all times. Presumably the house passed to their son, Thomas, though this is not stated in the will.¹

There is no record of William's election to the upper chamber of the corporation, although he took the oaths on the 5 September 1684 and attended the court as an alderman a few days later, when his name emerged as one of the two candidates for the mayoralty; in the same year, he was appointed civic treasurer in succession to Samuel Sykes*. These events suggest a determined effort by the Crown to promote one of its supporters to the magistracy. On the restoration of the second charter in 1689 he suffered the same fate as Gervase Neville* — dismissal and immediate re-election as assistant. However, whereas the latter refused reinstatement on the corporation's insistence that he pay the fines due on taking office, there is no record of such a fine being demanded of Sawer, who returned to the upper chamber the following year, again, apparently, without payment.² That the humiliation rankled, however, is suggested by his son's acceptance of a fine of £20 in 1699 for refusal of office on the ground that his father had 'laid an injunction upon him to the contrary'. No inhibition deterred William's grandson, however, who was appointed an assistant in 1723 and elected alderman and mayor three years later. His fine house in Boar Lane came to him in right of his wife, Dorothy,³ granddaughter of its former owner Marmaduke Hick*. Renovated in the new architectural style, it adorns the margin of John Cossins's map of 1726.⁴

Thoresby describes William Sawer's grave as marked by 'A handsome wrought Stone, with Death's-Head surmounted upon two skin-bones, with Hour glass'. With him were interred two sons and two daughters who predeceased him.⁵

*SKELTON, Henry (1619–1701), of Osmondthorpe, gent. ††
alderman 1661; reapp. 1684, mayor 1664–65, 1680–81; resnd 1694
younger s. of Seth S.* of Osmondthorpe; m. Ellen, dau. of Alderman
William Marshall Snr*; sons Seth, attorney, assistant 1684, John MD,
and Marmaduke*

¹ WYASL, DB 204/2, pp. 64, 69; Borthwick, Orig. Wills, March 1698/9; *LPC Regs*, V, 59.

² *Court Books*, pp. 88, 98–100, 144–45.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

⁴ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 6; *Printed Maps and Plans*, Plate II; WYASL, DB204/2, pp. 103–164.

⁵ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 51.

Like most aldermen, Henry Skelton responded to the corporation's financial needs by advancing money. For example, as mayor he was one of a group of four aldermen who underwrote a loan of £150 on the security of the bailiwick. In the event, the money was to be repaid by a certain Robert Hurst, and the group was then requested to wait upon him at his house, there to draw up the contract and the conveyance. After over thirty years' service his resignation on the grounds of age and ill-health was accepted and he retired without fine.¹

A serious domestic crisis in his household is revealed by a warrant dated 1 February 1667/8 for his unfortunate daughter Anne, who, after a secret marriage to Thomas Witham, a Leeds merchant, had, in terror of disobeying her father, 'married' Gilbert Cowper of Knowestrop. The condition of the pardon was recognition of the validity of the earlier marriage. Henry must have eventually forgiven her offence because he left Anne's son, Seth, a life annuity of 50s., and his letter of resignation from the corporation was read on his behalf by Henry Witham.²

On the 22 November 1701, a group of his friends, including Ralph Thoresby, walked by Conyshaw to Osmondthorpe to attend the alderman's funeral. Both Henry's eldest son, Seth, and his grandson Henry entered the law by way of Jesus College, Cambridge, whilst his youngest son, John, a pensioner at the same college, qualified as a Doctor of Medicine and practised in Leeds.³

STANHOPE, Henry (1642), of Briggate, mercer†† assistant 1672; reapp. 1684; alderman 1685; mayor 1687–88; resnd 1697. grands. of Walter S. of Horsforth, s. of Richard S. of Kirkgate (who m. Anne, dau. of Francis Allanson); m. (1) Anne, d. 1690; (2) Mrs Deborah Mason, dau. of Thomas Dixon* d. 1691; sons Walter, and Henry bur. LPC?*

Like the Foxcrofts, the Stanhopes moved into the West Riding about 1530, and settled in and around Horsforth on land formerly belonging to Kirkstall Abbey, where Walter Stanhope was assessed for subsidies between 1588 and 1627, and the households of various members of the family were assessed for the hearth tax of 1672.¹ As a younger son, Richard Stanhope

¹ *Court Books*, pp. 16, 24; WYASL, DB 204/1, p. 265.

² *LPC Regs*, III, p. 367; CSPD, 1667–1668, 205; Borthwick, Orig. Wills, March 1703/4; *Court Books*, p. 158.

³ Thoresby, *Diary*, I, 347; *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, I, iv, 82, 83.

¹ *Gentlemen Merchants*, p. 15; 'Lay Subsidy, Wapentake of Skyrack, 1588', *PThS*, XV (1909), 41; 'Subsidy Roll of the Wapentake of Skyrack, 1621', *PThS*, II, 66; 'Subsidy Roll of the Wapentake of Skyrack, 1627', *ibid.*, 79; 'Return of the Hearth Tax for the Wapentake of Skyrack', pt i, *ibid.*, 194, 195.

followed a path into Leeds well trodden by the sons of the country yeomanry: apprenticeship and marriage, possibly with the master's daughter, although whether Richard was apprenticed to Francis Allanson* is not known. Their grandmother, Bridget Allanson, bequeathed to her grandsons, Henry Stanhope and his brother, John, respectively, the great table with six plain stools standing in the hall, and a great silver tankard, tumbler and wine-cup. Two of their cousins, John and Edward Stanhope were lawyers and a third, Francis, having obtained his MD, practised as a doctor in Leeds.²

Henry's first wife died in the smallpox epidemic of 1689–90 and his second, Deborah, a year later. On their marriage, Deborah had transferred her deceased husband's business to Henry; and her will, made almost certainly under pressure from her husband, reveals their fears that her powerful father, bent on preventing family property from passing to the children of Henry's first marriage, might intervene to appropriate both the business and the tuition of her children.³

Shortly before his elevation to the upper chamber Henry was chosen to accompany Alderman Hick* to Westminster to present the town's Loyal Address on the accession of James II. In recognition of the niceties of civic precedence the alderman was granted £10 for the expenses of himself and a servant, whereas Stanhope received only £4. In the same year he and Christopher Pawson* were elected joint treasurers, and two years later the corporation elected Henry sole treasurer.⁴

During his mayoralty (to which he was elected *nemine contradicente*) national opinion was inflamed against King James by the imposition of the Three Questions aimed at discovering those who would be willing to support his efforts to secure a House of Commons amenable to the repeal of the anti-Catholic legislation. The King demanded to know of each individual recipient whether, if elected to Parliament, he would vote in favour of a repeal of the penal statutes and tests; whether in an election he would vote for candidates favourable to repeal; and, finally, the extent of his willingness to live in peace and religious equality with those of other persuasions. The answers countrywide though couched in loyal terms, were 'overwhelmingly negative'; indeed so stereotyped were they as to indicate some sort of organization behind them. Those returned by Mayor Stanhope and each of his fellows are typical: as an MP he would be guided entirely by the arguments heard in the House of Commons; in a parliamentary election his vote would be given to a loyal Anglican, and it had always been his habit to live at peace with all men.

² Borthwick, Prob. Reg. XLVIII, fol. 756; *Alumni Cabtabrigienses*, I, iv, 146.

³ *LPC Regs* IV, ed. by G. D. Lumb, *PThS*, X (1901), pp. 284, 361, 367; Borthwick, Prob. Reg. LXI, fol. 396.

⁴ *Court Books*, pp. 103, 112, 120. Subsequently, as Alderman Hick desired to be released from this duty his place was taken by the mayor, Gervase Neville,* *ibid.*, p. 104.

In accordance with the King's suspension of the penal laws, the Leeds magistrates were ordered by the Privy Council to restore such forfeited goods as remained unsold to their Quaker owners. In reply to a letter to this effect from the Earl of Sunderland, Mayor Stanhope assured him that most of the goods were indeed available and would be promptly restored.

Four years after the death of his second wife the corporation accepted Henry's resignation and he retired without fine. His son Walter replaced him as a member of the Committee of Pious Uses.⁵

*SYKES, Samuel (1635–84), of Tower Hill, merchant††
assistant 1663; alderman 1670; mayor 1674–75
grands. of Alderman Richard S.,* 3rd s. of Richard S., rector of
Kirkheaton; m. Elizabeth, dau. and coh. of John Simpson of Leeds, no
surv. sons
bur. LPC*

The properties in Leeds, Hunslet, Liversedge and Dewsbury which Alderman Richard Sykes devised to his younger son and namesake, for whom he had purchased the rectory of Kirkheaton, were distributed among the rector's five sons and two daughters, of whom the eldest son, Richard, followed his father into the Church, becoming rector of Spofforth and a prebendary of York, whilst Samuel, John and Bernard were probably in partnership as merchants, trading, respectively in Leeds, Dortmund and London.¹

Some time between 1663 and 1672, Samuel Sykes moved from Briggate to a house near Alderman Lawson* on Tower Hill, where, in the latter years, his household was assessed on six hearths. During his mayoralty, determined efforts were made, first, to punish violators of the laws against those perennial malpractices, forestalling, regrating and engrossing; secondly to protect the rights of Leeds traders to freedom from the payment of toll at Wakefield, by paying their defence costs out of the public purse.²

As civic treasurer from September 1676 until his death, Alderman Sykes was authorised to disburse money for the expenses of entertaining two justices of the court of king's bench; to receive all the records of the deceased town clerk, Samuel Brogden, from the hands of his widow; to pursue Alderman Headley* for an outstanding debt of £12 7s. 6d., and to reimburse Marmaduke Hick* and Gervase Neville* the £8 apiece voted

⁵ Kirby, *NH*, XXII, 153; *Court Books*, pp. 129–31; WYASL, DB 197/1, p. 88. When Thoresby saw Alderman Stanhope's family grave in LPC the inscription on the stone was so worn that the only name he was able to decipher was that of Henry's first wife. See Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p.46.

¹ TNA, Prob.11/226.

² 'Return of the Hearth Tax', pt ii, *PThS*, IV, 22; *Court Books*, pp. 50, 52.

them for the expenses of a journey to Windsor on municipal business. In the same capacity, he was expected to advance £10 towards the cost of defending an indictment against the townspeople of Leeds for failure to maintain Pontefract Lane. Since the corporation's expenditure consistently exceeded its income, which came almost entirely from the fees due from its members on admission to, or resignation from, office, the treasurer's task was often one of extracting money from his colleagues in order to repay these same colleagues the loans which they had advanced.³

After his death, the alderman's widow handed the *Treasury Book* to the sergeant-at-mace. To Thoresby, who attended his funeral on 30 May 1684, he was the 'worthy good friend . . . whose much lamented death is a public loss to this place'. Indeed as it tolled for him that day the passing bell signalled the disappearance of a famous Leeds family from the civic arena.⁴

WADE, Anthony (1634–83), of New Grange, merchant††
 assistant 1672; alderman 1673; mayor 1676
 grands. of Anthony W. of Kingcross, yeo. (d. 1616), s. of John W. of
 Kingcross and nephew of Alderman Benjamin W.* of New Grange
 m. Mary, dau. of John Moore of Greenhead, Lancs, gent., s. Benjamin,
 mayor 1718, grands. Walter, mayor 1757
 bur. Headingley chapel

The Wades came to Headingley through the marriage of Judith Foxcroft (sister-in-law of John Harrison*) with a prosperous Halifax yeoman, Anthony Wade of Kingcross, who eventually purchased the Foxcrofts' estate of New Grange for his eldest son, Benjamin. To his second son, Anthony, he left the capital messuages of Newton Wallis and West Carlton, whilst his third son, John, inherited his father's patrimony near Halifax. Through the deaths in quick succession of his two childless uncles the New Grange estate fell to John's son, Alderman Anthony Wade, whose descendants remained prominent in the civic and commercial life of Leeds.¹

Within a month of his uncle Benjamin's death in February 1672, Anthony was elected an assistant and, in spite of his never having attended a council meeting, he was promoted to the bench the following year. Indeed, save for his mayoral year, Anthony's record of attendance — twenty out of fifty meetings — suggests that he had little enthusiasm for civic affairs. With their mayor's record in mind, perhaps, his colleagues decided to recapitulate an order of the 13 September 1662 for the levying

³ Ibid., pp. 57, 58, 63–64, 65, 68, 69, 73, 91.

⁴ Thoresby, *Diary*, II, 431; *Court Books*, p. 38.

¹ Borthwick, Prob. Reg. XXXIV, fols 282–86; 'Return of the Hearth Tax', pt i, 196; *Court Books*, p. 39; Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 37.

of fines for absence from council meetings without good cause — an order the corporation seldom, if ever, succeeded in implementing. In the same year, taking note of the ‘great commerce and traid yt is exercised in this place’, the corporation decided, on a majority vote, to apply to the postmaster general for authority to appoint a postmaster for Leeds, to carry mail to and from the collection point at Ferrybridge. Among the ten members present who either abstained or voted against the motion were Godfrey Lawson,* Samuel Sykes* and Joseph Balmer.* At the same meeting, the council, addressing itself to the perennial conflict over the payment of toll, voted to reimburse Arthur Roome, collector of the Leeds toll, the expenses of defending a legal challenge to the town’s right to tax ‘foreign’ traders.²

In Headingley chapel, Thoresby saw the ‘stately’ monument of white marble erected by Anthony’s son, Benjamin, to the memory of his father and great-uncle.³

WADE, Benjamin, see p. 68–69 above

*WATKINSON, Christopher (1630–76), of the Headrow, merchant†‡ alderman 1661; mayor 1668–69
grands. of Henry W. of Ilkley, yeo., 3rd s. of Henry W. of Leeds, assistant 1626 (d. 1638); m. Mary, dau. of William Foxley, mayor of Hull; s. Christopher, merchant; daus Mary m. Sir David Hockstetter of London, merchant, Bridget m. Richard Thornton, town clerk of Leeds.*

Henry Watkinson Jr settled in Leeds as a first-generation immigrant from a well-to-do yeoman family. As the eldest son, he inherited his father’s lands in the parish of Giggleswick, the household stuff in the family house in Settle, and the first choice of a piece of plate from his father’s collection. He was, therefore, a fitting match for Bridget Lodge, who, through her mother, Alice Reame, was related to several of the leading families of the old Leeds Tudor élite. Being under-age at the time of their father’s death, Henry’s children were committed to the care of their grandmother, Alice Lodge, rather than to Henry’s second wife, to whom he left a legacy of £300, an annuity of £30 and, in addition to her own furniture, one bed with ‘competent’ furniture. If she were not thereby content the legacies were to be annulled and she was to have only what was legally due to her. The bulk of Henry’s estate, including a portion of the North Hall estate which he had purchased from Thomas Metcalfe,* went to his two elder sons, of whom one became chancellor of York; but Christopher was sufficiently well endowed to achieve an advantageous marriage. Henry

² *Court Books*, pp. 39, 44, 59, 61.

³ Thoresby, *Ducatus*, p. 151.

Watkinson's will is unusual in that he discloses the names of his principal creditors, all members of the family, to whom he owed a total of £1733.¹

Alderman Christopher does not seem to have had any great enthusiasm for council business, for, in spite of a demand that he show cause why he should not be charged the fine of 10s. due from an alderman for absence from the court, his record of attendance continued to be erratic. As mayor, he and his kinsman Alderman Lawson* received an alarming summons to appear before the Privy Council on the complaint of an excise official of 'something said or done prejudicial to the king's service'. Fearing they might not receive a fair hearing, Watkinson prevailed upon Sir Edward Jennings to intercede with Lord Arlington's secretary, Joseph Williamson, with an assurance that both aldermen were of unblemished character and 'not a little instrumentally active towards His Majesty's restoration'.²

¹ Borthwick, *Orig. Wills*, December 1638 (Henry Watkinson, Jnr); Kirby, *PThS*, LIX, 28, 37, 40, 44; Borthwick, *Prob. Reg.* XXXI, fol. 496 (Henry Watkinson, Snr).

² *Court Books*, p. 14; *CSPD*, 1668-69, p. 232.

Part Three — Observations on *East Prospect of Leedes in Yorkshire from Chaveler Hill**

Emeritus Professor M. W. Beresford, MA, DLitt, LittD, FBA

On 16 October 1719, aged 23 and at the beginning of his career as a topographical artist, Samuel Buck accompanied Ralph Thoresby and the cartographer John Warburton ‘to take a new prospect of the Town from Priestcliff, near Cavalier Hill’ but were driven back by rain. Buck’s sketchbook for this period contains drawings of several Leeds subjects, including a panorama of Leeds stretching across four pages. In his contents list, Buck reckoned these as ‘the South Prospect of Leeds’ and ‘Leeds continued’: in fact, the standpoint of the sketches affords more an eastern than a southern view of the town, the chancel of the parish church being end-on to the viewer.

The sketches must have proved inadequate as a basis for a published engraving, for, on 5 April 1720, Thoresby went again with Buck and a friend ‘to choose a convenient station upon Cavalier Hill, to take a long prospect of Leeds, designed to be printed’; and for a third time, together with his cousin Cookson, to see the artist give ‘the finishing stroke to *The Prospect of Leeds from Cavalier Hill*’. The *Prospect* was now to be entitled *East* and the viewpoint and certain details were not identical with that of the sketchbook panorama although both drawings used the device of a level hill-top foreground leaving the steep westward slope out of sight. Prominent in the foreground of the present engraving is a figure seated on a bank of furze and resting his drawing board on his knee, presumably a self-portrait of Buck. His companion, equally bewigged and well dressed, seems too young to be Thoresby (then sixty-two) or his cousin Cookson (then fifty-one): the entry in Thoresby’s diary names a Mr (Joseph) Bland as the third member of the April party.

Thoresby’s interest went beyond afternoon excursions to watch an artist at work; he was active in helping Buck canvass for subscribers to meet the cost of engraving and printing in London and, when they were ready in January 1722, he personally delivered the copies due to Leeds subscribers.

* This text is a draft of what Professor Beresford was working on. When he died in 2005, ill health had prevented him finalising the manuscript.



S. Buck Delin

FIGURE 4 Samuel Buck's view of Leeds from the east. Note Buck himself drawing in the foreground.

Thoresby Society Collection.

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Hol Beck | 6 The Bridge |
| 2 Farnley Wood | 7 Armley Moor |
| 3 Armley Hall | 8 The Old Church of St Peters |
| 4 The Church Ings | 9 William Cooksons Esq ^r . |
| 5 The River Aire | 10 John Atkinsons Esq ^r . |

To the Worship^{ful}. The Mayor and Aldermen of the Corporation of Leedes this Prospect is Humbly Inscribed by
Your Hum^{ble} Servant
S. Buck



J. Harris Sculpt

11 The Independent Meeting House

12 The White Cloth Hall

13 The Vicarage

14 The Museum of Ralph Thoresby Esq^r.

15 The Red Hall

* To facilitate ease of identification the numbers of the key have been overlaid.

Numerals enhanced by B. Chippendale and D. Thornton

16 The New Church St Johns

17 The Charity School

18 Robt. Dennison Esq^r.

19 March Lane

20 Chaveler Hill

This Leeds *Prospect* and one of Wakefield seem to be the earliest of what was to be a long series of topographical engravings in which Buck was soon joined by his brother Nathaniel. In 1745, their town views were gathered together as a book, Leeds being represented by a recently drawn *South-East Prospect* which has since been several times reproduced.

Only two copies of the earlier *Prospect* can now be located: one in the library of the Society of Antiquaries of London at Burlington House and the other in the library of the Thoresby Society where a full-size photograph can be seen by visitors. This *Prospect* illustrates both Cossins's map of 1726 and Thoresby's own *Ducatus* of 1715.

In the print, the line of North Street can be followed from the church by the houses between the Charity School (17) and Robert Denison's new house (18), which was almost the last in what was then called Town's End (the later North Street); the broken line of houses descending the slope to the right hand margin must (with some distortion of perspective) represent those on the way to Sheepscar. The farmhouses in Marsh Lane (19) had already begun to gather in their former fold-yards smaller cottages of one or two storeys. A long line of vacant tenter posts runs across the adjacent field, and further to the left six figures, just to the left of the artist's head, are standing at a trestle table beating fleeces. Further to the left, and the most prominent of the foreground features, is a close group of at least sixteen buildings, five of them with chimneys characteristic of dye houses. One building has a lattice pattern of ventilators in its brickwork and those on the extreme left seem to be set into a slope, leaving only a glimpse of the river at the margin of the engraving. In the adjacent field, stand six lines of rails where a workman has just finished mounting cloth on the tenterhooks and a second carries away a roll of cloth. The Aire (5) reappears to the right of the dyehouses, and here again there are tenter posts. Beyond the bridge (6) the river curves away invisibly to the left before being joined by Hol Beck (1). Church Ings (4), the meadows on the nearer bank, also have tenters. Buck ignored Timble Beck, although there is a significant gap in the line of houses making up Marsh Lane when it reached the wettest ground before crossing Timble Bridge to enter Kirkgate at York Bar. A slightly curving line of seventeen trees may mark the bank of the stream.

Within the streets of the town centre Buck was unable to delineate every house, remembering that in Kirkgate, which had to be viewed almost end-on, there were at least a hundred houses, with more in Briggate; and that the short length of Call Lane between the church and the bridge had at least twenty-eight frontages. A panoramic view pays some deference to perspective, making foreground buildings larger than those in the town, but in the town itself there had to be compromise and within it there is little distinction between buildings at different distances. Houses are shown realistically on different alignments and not with

conventional facades: the number of storeys and windows are not always the same, and where they can be checked against later illustrations (as with the five bays of the Atkinson and Denison houses) the panorama is accurate. It cannot of course be claimed that Buck was showing every house in the town-centre streets. His was a panoramic not an aerial view so that the houses in the foreground obscure others further away. The east side of Vicar Lane, backing on to Mill Garth and Crackenthorpe Garden come off best since there was nothing but fields between them and the artist. Further west, the gentle slope of Briggate helped to bring its roofs into vision. The line of Kirkgate can be plotted by moving leftwards from the vicarage (13) back to St Peter's (8), although the alignment of the street in relation to the artist's standpoint presents us with a mixture of frontages and backside facades. The White Cloth Hall in Kirkgate (12) is correctly placed near the Atkinson house (10) which was in Call Lane but it would hardly be realised from the panorama that it lay almost opposite the vicarage.

William Cookson's house in Kirkgate was so hidden by St Peter's that nothing of it could be shown and the key number (9) had to be placed on the church roof. Of the more distant Nonconformist chapel on Mill Hill (11) no more than a roof is visible. Alderman Atkinson's house, then only eight years old and the largest in the town, is distinguished by its turrets and cupola (10). The upper storeys and roof gables of Red Hall, the town's second largest private house (15), can be seen to the left of St John's (16).

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Part Four — The Thoresby Society: the First Hundred Years

The History of the Thoresby Society

G. C. F. Forster, BA, FSA, FRHistS

From the second quarter of the nineteenth century there were major advances in the encouragement of, and the provision for, historical studies of varied scope, advances which owed much to the Romantic movement and to the intellectual climate of the times. They coincided, for example, with the Tractarians' search for the religious practices of the early Church and with the enquiries of scientists (notably geologists and biologists) into the origins of man. They were of a piece with the enthusiasm for past glories in architecture — the Gothic Revival — as well as for archaeological investigation of the buried or standing physical remains of the past. They reflected the vigorous concern shown by Sir Walter Scott and others for rescuing not only those remains but other evidence as well: documents, smaller artefacts, ballad-histories, traditions. Furthermore, the Victorian period was an era of growing industrial and commercial wealth which stimulated new social ambitions, generated better means of travel, prompted a keener desire for education and self-improvement, and provided increasing numbers of people with more leisure for the pursuit of intellectual concerns. In that general social climate there developed an important local dimension, the fruit of various influences: pride in industrial achievements; a sense of civic patriotism, dignity, and local identity; a competitive spirit; localism as a defence against centralisation; the wish for some feeling of continuity in the midst of rapid changes (as well as an explanation for them); nostalgia; regard for the protection of traditions and physical reminders of times gone by.

Accordingly, attitudes, fashions, opportunity, popular interest, and serious historical concerns led in the fullness of time to the establishment of societies which would publish historical records and investigate and describe the past. They were greatly assisted by the statutory provisions made in 1838 for the care of public records, the building of the Public Record Office itself begun in 1851, the foundation of the Historical Manuscripts Commission in 1869, and the great series of documents published by those two bodies. From the 1830s to the 1860s, historical societies were founded in all the northern counties, notably (for Yorkshire)

the Surtees Society, inaugurated in 1834 to publish manuscripts from the whole of the ancient kingdom of Northumbria, and the body eventually entitled the Yorkshire Archaeological Society, established in 1863. The movement gathered pace and, during the 1880s, almost fifty historical societies of various kinds were formed: one of these was the Thoresby Society, which thus belongs to a vintage period.¹

I

The scheme for a society originated in a letter to the press in the town in March 1889 from Colonel Edmund Wilson, who called for the formation of a local historical society in Leeds. He had chosen a propitious moment, because, since 1882, there had been a hard-fought campaign to save the ruins of Kirkstall Abbey from irreversible damage or misguided reconstruction, a battle the ultimate success of which owed much to the efforts and generosity of Wilson himself. The preservation of the legacy of the past was, therefore, a lively issue in the town; so too were considerations of civic pride and the competitive spirit, for a historical society had been established in Bradford in 1878. Wilson's initiative was promptly supported by the local press, a circular was widely distributed, and a meeting in the Philosophical Hall (which housed the museum) was arranged for 13 May. Some fifty gentlemen attended, to hear Professor Cyril Ransome propose (with the support of Dr J. E. Eddison) the formation of a local historical society, a motion which was carried; a suggestion that the new association should bear the name of Ralph Thoresby was turned down in favour of 'Leeds Historical and Antiquarian Society'; an annual subscription of 5s. was agreed, and a rules committee was appointed to draw up a constitution. At a further meeting, the rules were adopted, the momentous decision was taken to abandon the original title in favour of the 'Thoresby Society', and the subscription was raised to 10s. 6d., an increase disputed by some on the grounds that, as an educational institution, the society should not deter the recruitment of less prosperous members. It also agreed that membership should be open to ladies, at least three of whom joined at once. A sign of a wider enthusiasm was the total of twenty-six candidates for the twelve places on the first council; Col. Wilson was elected president, Professor Ransome became the first honorary secretary, Mr John Stansfeld the first honorary treasurer, and the Revd Charles Hargrove

¹ For illuminating accounts of these aspects of the development of historical studies, see: Charles Dellheim, *The Face of the Past* (Cambridge, 1982); Philippa Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England, 1838-1886* (Cambridge, 1986); Stuart Piggott, *Ruins in a Landscape* (Edinburgh, 1976), chap. IX.

became the librarian. During the remainder of 1889, more members joined; by the end of the year there were 172 subscribers, including twenty-four life members.

The founders included many of the most prominent figures in Victorian Leeds. Edmund Wilson, the first president, was a solicitor with offices in the Red Hall and a leading member of the Conversation Club who was also — or would become — a colonel in the Volunteer Service, president of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, and a town councillor. Amongst senior members of the Yorkshire College were Nathan Bodington, the principal, Cyril Ransome (professor of modern literature and history — and father of Arthur), L. C. Miall (professor of biology and FRS). Well-known medical supporters were J. E. Eddison and J. B. Hellier; leading figures in the Church included the vicar of Leeds, E. S. Talbot, the minister of Mill Hill chapel, Charles Hargrove, the incumbents of Headingley and Adel, and other local clergy including J. H. D. Matthews from the grammar school. Talbot Baines and T. Wemyss Reid were influential members of the press, and several of the best known industrial and commercial family names appear in the list of early members: Fowler, Kitson, Lupton, Nussey. That influential membership clearly helped the society to prosper during its crucial early years, but much depended on the skill of the president, officers and council: Colonel Wilson was president for seventeen years; by 1894, G. D. Lumb (with a legal background) and Lt.-Col. Edwin Kitson Clark (a distinguished engineer) had become honorary secretaries, embarking on a lifetime of service to the society in various capacities.² Along with local connections, the enduring loyalty of such men was a source of strength to the Thoresby Society; it was a fitting response to the charge given at the inaugural meeting by the first honorary treasurer, John Stansfeld: ‘What we want in the society is workers, not ornamentals.’

II

The society’s five objectives were clearly set down in the first constitution, adopted in July 1889: to collect and preserve books, manuscripts and other materials relating to the town *and neighbourhood* (my italics); to transcribe and publish local records; to prepare views and plans of historic buildings; to prepare and publish papers of historical, antiquarian, and biographical interest; to prepare a history of Leeds and take any action conducive to that

² Details of many of the leading office holders will be found in the obituaries mentioned in the Indexes listed in the note on sources at the end of this article.

end. To facilitate those activities, the officers and council soon accomplished the essential administrative tasks. They opened a bank account at once, bought a cash book, and sent a circular to would-be members asking for subscriptions; a seal, minute book, and register for members were obtained. They opened discussions with the Law Institution (later Society) and the corporation about the possible use of rooms, and they sent an advertisement for the society to the press — and to an American library periodical, an interestingly far-sighted action.

Mindful too of the society's *raison d'être*, they approached the authorities of the parish church for permission to transcribe the registers, and they pressed the corporation to undertake the necessary repairs to Kirkstall Abbey; twenty years later they sent a similar exhortation to the rector of Adel over the state of the church's Norman portal.

In pursuit of the society's objectives, Professor Ransome had drawn up an elaborate working scheme, with organised sections for research in a variety of subjects: local topography and buildings; churches; Kirkstall Abbey; manorial history; charities; genealogy; houses; industries; folk lore; archaeological sites; bibliography; the formation of a library; the transcription of documents. Some sections began work but within a few years it was apparent that, in general, this scheme was moribund, because it was too ambitious. Nevertheless, enthusiasts in at least three of the sections had achievements to their credit: a collection of photographic plates of Leeds sites was begun; the acquisition of local books and documents had started; and members had ventured on the task of transcribing important historical manuscripts. From the outset, publications were intended, and plans made during the society's first year resulted in the appearance in print of the earlier registers of Leeds Parish Church, the registers of Adel up to 1812, Calverley charters, and two miscellanies of shorter documents and notes. In all, seven volumes were published during the first decade; E. Kitson Clark and G. D. Lumb were prominent amongst the editors and contributors.

Other early activities included occasional lectures and — apparently more important — excursions. For those, a committee was established in 1890, working on the strict understanding that excursions would be self-supporting. Fittingly, the first outdoor meeting was held at Kirkstall Abbey and was addressed by J. T. Micklethwaite, the scholarly architect in charge of the restoration; later excursions travelled out of town. During the 1890s, however, there was a heavy emphasis on the collection of books and other publications; Thoresby's own copy of his *Ducatus Leodiensis* was purchased in 1893; and exchanges of publications were arranged with other societies pursuing similar interests in different parts of the country. Books, pictures and antiquarian objects belonging to the society or to individual members were displayed in 1894 at a *conversazione* (with music), the undoubted success of which raised the difficult question of a permanent home for the society. It had first used the Law Institute for meetings, then the Philosophical Hall, then a room at the Public Library, but a better prospect

appeared in 1896. In that year, the Thoresby and Yorkshire Archaeological Societies jointly secured a lease of the old Medical School at 10 Park Street to provide headquarters for both organisations: it was a major step forward, giving the society a centre for its growing collections and a base for its expanding activities.

The acquisition of its own home provided a boost to the society. Within five years, the council felt able to join with the YAS in buying the whole of the premises for £3000 and accepting from its partner a loan towards the purchase price, a debt repaid within twenty years. The library for the use of members was steadily built up by purchase, gift and bequest; a book fund was established in 1903; the following year, the society mounted a public exhibition of photographs of Leeds and prints of Kirkstall Abbey. To facilitate greater and more comfortable use of headquarters, electric lighting was installed there in 1909. Excursions flourished: the society's officers could justifiably claim that no visits had been repeated until after the sixty-third excursion. The publications multiplied and broadened in range. Between 1891 and 1916, twenty-three volumes were published; in addition to those already mentioned they included the grammar school admission books, West Riding wills, a history of Barwick-in-Elmet, registers of Methley and of Leeds chapelries, studies of West Riding place-names (by Professor F. W. Moorman), letters addressed to Ralph Thoresby, four miscellanies, the coucher book of Kirkstall Abbey, and its architectural history analysed by two nationally known experts on historic buildings, W. H. St John Hope and John Bilson. Work done for all branches of the society's activities was entirely voluntary, expenses were low and, with an annual income averaging some £250, the society was solvent, thanks in the main to increasing membership: 172 in 1889; 254 in 1894; 322 in 1900; 397 by 1912. Moreover, that membership included some of the most distinguished editors of manuscripts, and antiquarians of the day: W. P. Baildon, William Brown, J. W. Clay, W. T. Lancaster, Francis Collins, John Bilson, C. T. Clay (later Sir Charles Clay, FBA), G. D. Lumb, and E. Kitson Clark who, together with the historians Professors J. H. Clapham and A. J. Grant, formed a truly scholarly galaxy.

After twenty-five years of achievement, the onset of war in 1914 inevitably gave rise to difficulties and constraints for the society. The president elected in 1915, Archdeacon H. A. Hall, and Colonel Kitson Clark were called away for duty elsewhere and there were casualties amongst the members. Perforce, the excursion programme came to a halt and the total of members fell back to a little over 300. The publications continued, but there were delays in completion; on the other hand, some reduction in expenditure led to an improved bank balance. In Leeds, as elsewhere, business as usual was attempted whenever possible. The society's annual general meetings continued and were held in the Town Hall. The officers and council conducted much of their normal business: in 1917, for example, they bought a fireproof safe for the storage of manuscripts and accepted a

gift from Dr Eddison of portable steps for use in the library. In a very different display of confidence, with an eye to the future, the president made two interesting suggestions at the AGMs in 1917 and 1918, respectively: first, he suggested that Leeds should have a genuinely local museum; on the second occasion, he proposed that the society should organise public lectures for schoolchildren, in the hope of developing their interest in the past. Unfortunately, perhaps, neither proposal bore fruit.

III

After the war the Thoresby Society returned to normal as quickly as possible, and the inter-war years, despite difficulties, proved to be largely a period of consolidation, even accomplishment, rather than repose. From 1920, when Miss Emily Hargrave became librarian, the library expanded by gift and purchase and was more heavily used; in 1921 it benefited by a generous bequest from W. T. Lancaster, a retired bank manager and a distinguished editor of manuscripts. Four years later, the society and the YAS were tempted by a favourable offer to sell their joint property and part company. With its share of the proceeds, the society invested £2000, and for £900 it was able to purchase 16 Queen Square, the former home of William Boyne, a tobacco and snuff manufacturer, a sometime member, a notable antiquary, numismatist, and bibliographer. The library was a significant beneficiary of the new headquarters. There was more space for the collections; the shelving was re-arranged; the catalogue was updated and borrowing simplified.

There were other important developments. In 1929, a regular series of lectures was inaugurated: Percy Robinson, an architect, spoke about the city's historic buildings; there were other lectures on customs and costumes, heraldry, and the diary of a Bramley scribbling miller. As the attendance, ranging from twenty-five to seventy, was deemed satisfactory, the lecture series was continued during the 1930s, but by no means all the chosen topics were connected with the Leeds district. Another venture began in 1930–31 with the launch of a Roman research committee, linked with the Yorkshire Archaeological Society; inspired, no doubt, by Col. Kitson Clark and led by his daughter, Mary (later Mrs Derwas Chitty, and a vice-president), it was the society's first official project in archaeology and undertook the search for the Roman camp at Adel, but slow and uncertain progress was subsequently reported. The society's excursions, however, flourished during the 1930s, benefiting from the expert knowledge and lecturing skill of Professor A. Hamilton Thompson, FBA (president 1934–39), an authority on the history and architecture of castles, monasteries and churches. He had already made an invaluable contribution to the publications with his substantial monograph on the history and

buildings of Bolton Priory, one of several important single items issued between the wars, despite delays (and unhampered by the rise in costs which by the early 1930s reached £150–£200 per volume). These included documents relating to the woollen industry (1780–1820), more local wills, extracts from eighteenth-century Leeds newspapers and, above all, the first court book of Leeds corporation, 1662–1705. All these publications, as well as more miscellanies with their mixture of short documents and brief historical notes on an astonishing variety of subjects, met — if belatedly — the exhortation of the lord mayor, Charles Lupton, in 1916 to publish ‘something less dull and statistical’ than previously. Nevertheless, the society continued to publish its series of parochial and chapelry registers, of whose historical value Mr Lupton seems to have had an imperfect appreciation. In all, although the pace of publication had slowed somewhat since its earlier years, the society had issued thirty-eight very useful volumes by 1938, including the first part of a new miscellany, a total which reflected considerable credit on its various (and numerous) contributors and editors, especially the indefatigable G. D. Lumb.³

By the time of its golden jubilee (1889–1939), the society had, therefore, much to celebrate but there were two threatening clouds on the horizon. Despite the continuity of publication, the undoubted popularity of the excursions, and the attractions of the lecture programme, the number of members fell from almost 400 in the 1920s to only 284 in 1938. It is not easy to be sure of an explanation for the decline but several factors might have adversely affected recruitment: economic difficulties; easier travel by public transport or car; the attractions of other leisure time amenities, notably the cinema and the wireless. Besides, difficulties over membership paled into insignificance in the face of the international crisis and the approach of war. Consequently, the planned jubilee celebration — in the form of an ‘At Home and Reception’ in the Brotherton Library, arranged for the 29 September 1939 — had to be cancelled, but a ‘jubilee review’, written to mark the occasion by another of the society’s stalwarts, W. B. Crump, was distributed to members. Significantly, and wisely, that paper ended with a call for more younger members and for new avenues of research in local history.

IV

No major initiatives were likely to be possible in wartime conditions but, although the society’s activities were — inevitably — seriously affected

³. Mr Lumb died in August 1939, shortly after completing another piece of work.

during the war years from 1939 to 1945, they were not totally disrupted. Some individuals were able to continue private work on potential publications. Lectures were held on Saturday afternoons to avoid the restrictions of the blackout. From 1942, tea was provided at the lectures, an innovation which apparently met with cordial approval, although the officers found that wartime shortages made it difficult to buy crockery. Only local excursions could be organised, a constraint which had the advantage of stirring up interest in nearby places otherwise easily overlooked. To protect the collections, fire-fighting equipment was obtained, and air raid precautions were observed, but, fortunately, the library sustained no damage in the aerial attacks on the city. Initially, use of the library was much diminished but members' visits increased markedly from 1942; by then the new card catalogue had been completed, and more shelving obtained, to permit some re-organisation of the collection. Finally, the need for recording and conservation stimulated other worthwhile activities: Mr J. Sprittles (a future president) began his inventory of church plate belonging to the parish church and the chapelries of the historic parish of Leeds; volunteers undertook a survey of all the parochial records in the deanery and a record of monumental inscriptions in the oldest churches; other members checked and amended the National Buildings Record's list of historic buildings in the city. By thus concentrating on what could be undertaken even amidst wartime stringencies, and enjoying the continuing services of devoted office holders, the society was able to preserve some momentum and thereby attain a modest but steady growth in membership, which rose from 259 in 1940 to 298 in 1945.⁴

V

In common with numerous other organisations, the Thoresby Society experienced during the post-war years a period of both continuity and change. It was quick off the mark with publicity for its work; a new leaflet setting out the rules was made available; electric radiators were installed at the headquarters for the comfort of members using the library; a catalogue of manuscripts was completed; more elaborate excursions were organised; the lectures attracted larger audiences and were moved to a bigger meeting-room adjacent to the headquarters. The early emphasis on recruitment paid off: the total of members rose to 345 in 1946 and reached 452 in 1949. In the latter year, the society celebrated its diamond jubilee in proper style: a special lecture; a dinner; a service in Leeds Parish Church;

⁴ It should be noted that successive presidents died in office during the war, Colonel Kitson Clark in April 1943 and Professor A. S. Turberville in May 1945.

an exhibition in the Art Gallery; and the publication of the first in a series of monographs, a study of the Regency architect, Thomas Taylor.

These celebrations provided the opportunity for a review of the society's achievements and its future plans. In the light of increased expenditure (to about £400 p.a.) and the possibility of resuming regular publications (with their attendant costs), it was agreed in 1950 to raise the annual subscription from 10s.6d. to 15s., the first increase since 1889. That fee remained fixed for a decade, but thereafter inflation took its toll, and expenditure rose inexorably, from roughly £500 by 1960 to £1900 by 1970 and £4600 in 1981. Fortunately, the society's funds remained in surplus because it attracted a steady stream of new members: the total exceeded 500 in 1971 for the first time and reached 528 in 1986. Nevertheless, after 1960 the council deemed it prudent to secure repeated increases in the subscription rate: £1 1s. (1961); £1 10s. (1965); £2.50 (1974); £4 (1978); £6 (1982), rising to £10 before the end of the 1980s. Apart from general administrative expenditure and the ever-rising cost of publication, the extra funds were required to meet the expense of the society's headquarters, adversely affected by changed circumstances.

From 1962, Queen Square faced the threat of demolition and re-development at an unspecified date. In order to resolve the uncertainty, the council decided that it must begin the search for new premises, no easy task in the context of the time. Various possibilities were pursued without success, including an imaginative scheme to house several learned societies in a building within the precincts of the university, a project for which the necessary financial backing was not forthcoming. With its headquarters under 'planning blight', the society's position looked serious for some time, and the city council offered no help. Fortunately, and coincidentally, the Yorkshire Archaeological Society decided to move from Park Place, and through the good sense of the officers involved the two societies collaborated in the search for a building to house both organisations. Ultimately the choice fell on Claremont, a listed building of some distinction, where the society became a tenant of the YAS in September 1968. The removal of the library, furniture, and other effects from Queen Square to its rented rooms in Claremont was smoothly accomplished by a team of volunteers with little or no dislocation of the society's activities, which had continued on an undiminished scale during the years of uncertainty. The move to the new headquarters was an important development, although the loss of the society's independent base was regretted, and the financial (and other) obligations of tenancy had to be met.⁵

The new circumstances, on balance, probably gave encouragement to an already thriving society, which also benefited from the rapidly growing

⁵ The society was able to sell 16 Queen Square in 1986.

interest in serious local history all over the country, a most welcome aspect of the times. With the growth in membership, the library was more heavily used, and the lecture programme attracted larger audiences, though there was some falling-off in support for excursions by coach, probably because of the cost, and the expansion of car ownership. From 1974, there was an annual members' evening, held near Christmas; with short talks and seasonal refreshments it immediately became a popular event.

The revived publications programme after the war continued the series of miscellanies as well as the extracts from local newspapers, but there were important innovations too, with a wider range of subjects as the society was able to profit from the expanding scale of historical research, amateur and professional alike. The nature of the miscellanies changed, to comprise a small number of longer, more substantial articles instead of a multiplicity of short notes. To complement earlier work, studies of the excavations at Kirkstall Abbey and Pontefract Priory appeared, as well as an edition of the Kirkstall chronicles and a general account of the abbey's history. Two fundamentally important volumes of primary sources were published, presenting records of the manor and borough of Leeds from 1066 to 1662 (issued, let it be said, with no financial assistance from the corporation).

A greater emphasis on monographs produced other important publications, among them a descriptive catalogue of local maps and plans, an account of a Victorian social reformer, works on Georgian public buildings and on Victorian church life, and Professor Maurice Beresford's magnificent study of the city's topography, *East End, West End*. Attempts to encourage sales to the public by converting offprints to booklets had mixed results, but a wallet of maps with annotations proved popular. More generally, it should be recorded that the standard and prestige of the publications have enabled the society to secure funds from national grant-giving foundations.

VI

The Thoresby Society can record a hundred years of notable achievements. In its library it has a splendid collection of books and other materials, printed and unprinted. It has served the community by providing exhibitions, lending items from its collections, and presenting public lectures. The impressively varied contents of its publications amount to an indispensable 'library of Leeds'. Members have enjoyed the educational and social pleasures of imaginatively organised excursions — 432 of them by the centenary year. The lectures have been for the members a source of intellectual stimulus, interest, mutual assistance, and a sense of fellowship with others holding common interests.

In short, at its centenary the Thoresby Society can fairly claim to have fulfilled the hopes expressed in the first annual report by its founders and become a 'permanent and valuable addition to the institutions of the Borough of Leeds'.

Note on Sources

The main sources for this lecture are the unpublished minutes of the society's council, and the *Annual Reports* prepared for the annual general meetings; they are in the society's library. Detailed lists of the contents of the society's publications will be found in: *Jubilee Index to the Publications of the Thoresby Society 1889–1939* (1941); *Index to the Publications of the Thoresby Society, volumes XXXVII–LI, 1939–68* (1968); *Index to the Publications of the Thoresby Society: Publications issued from 1969–2004* (2006).

The Thoresby Society Centenary Sermon
Delivered in Leeds Parish Church
On Mattins Sunday after Ascension 7 May 1989
by

The Revd Canon K. H. Stapleton

Before announcing my text, I should like on behalf of the Thoresby Society, to thank the Priest-in-Charge very much indeed for the warmth of his welcome to us all.

The Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 21, verse 39: 'a citizen of no mean city'.

So St. Paul describes himself, as belonging to the city of Tarsus in Cilicia. I am sure too that it is a fitting description of Ralph Thoresby, a very notable citizen of Leeds, his native place, which he greatly loved and faithfully served all the days of his life. My thoughts in this sermon fall into two parts. In the first part I will say something about Thoresby himself, and also make the briefest mention of the character and achievements of the society which bears his name, the Thoresby Society, during its first hundred years. In the second part, I would venture to speak about the abiding value of the work which it has been able to do.

Ralph Thoresby was born in Kirkgate in 1658, his father, John Thoresby being a cloth merchant, a business in which he trained his son, Ralph, and which Ralph then inherited on his father's death in 1679. He was brought up as a Puritan, and attended the Presbyterian Church, as it then was, at Mill Hill. Though a merchant, Thoresby's heart was in other things — in wide-ranging historical interests, and particularly in the history of Leeds. Indeed, the last thirty years or so of his life were chiefly devoted to these pursuits, to the great benefit of posterity.

On the advice of his father, whom he loved and revered, he kept a diary, very largely as a spiritual exercise, and subsequently of the greatest importance for what it tells us about his life and circumstances. He was a great collector and, beginning with what his father left him, he built up a museum of such significance that it was visited by a number of distinguished people. What a great, great pity that it was dispersed after his

death! He was an acknowledged authority on coins, of which he possessed nearly two thousand four hundred, and was also an authority on medals, and he recognised the importance of such things in filling up the gaps in recorded history. He was equally well-versed in heraldry and genealogy, and was no amateur in field archaeology, knowing a good deal about Roman sites in the North of England.

Despite his lack of early academic training, his diligence and care in his chosen subjects earned him the trust and friendship of many of the leading scholars of his day, and his high standing was rewarded by his election to The Royal Society, to whose proceedings he submitted a number of papers. After many years of research, he published in 1715 his history of Leeds, the *Ducatus Leodiensis*, which was the first local history of anywhere in the North. It was a very great work, which compares favourably with other studies of the period, and remains a source of information for all who have followed in his steps. Just before his death in 1725, he published his history of the Church in Leeds, the *Vicaria Leodiensis*.

Above all, Thoresby was a man of God. His standards of prayer, of Bible study and worship were of the highest, and the time which he gave to the cultivation of his devotional life would, I believe, shame all of us. He joined the Church of England in 1697, and came greatly to love the worship at Leeds Parish Church. How appropriate therefore that we of the Thoresby Society should on this occasion be sharing in worship in this building, where, as many of you will know, there is a memorial tablet to Thoresby in the south-east corner of the chancel. His religion found expression in his daily affairs, beginning with his home life, his deep love for his wife, Anna, and his children, and care for his servants. We recall too his very varied service to the community, including his work for children, for instance in what he did for the Leeds Charity School and through his active support of the Lord Wharton Bible Charity, which he rated very highly. We must not forget his attractive tolerance, both in religious and political affairs, the more remarkable in an age hardly notable for such an attitude. How right it is that we should thank God for Ralph Thoresby.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century local historical societies were springing up in various parts of England and, among them, the Leeds Historical and Antiquarian Society, soon to be re-named The Thoresby Society, was founded in 1889, a hundred years ago. This followed the initiative of a local solicitor, the very public-spirited Colonel Edmund Wilson. What an important step this was in the life of our city, for which the society has done such valuable work. Time prevents me from making anything more than the briefest mention of what it has been able to accomplish.

We think, however, of the focusing of interest in local history, which truly is part of our national history. This has been done through the printing of local records, beginning with parish registers, and through articles of

a very high standard of learning in the publications of the society throughout the years, which cover the widest range of matters affecting Leeds and its neighbourhood. All this is of inestimable importance, and in itself merits our deep gratitude.

Let us remember also, and with justifiable pride, the publication of major historical works, such as the *Coucher Book of Kirkstall Abbey* in 1904; St. John Hope and John Bilson's *Kirkstall Abbey* in 1907; and Professor Hamilton Thompson's *Bolton Priory* in 1928. Coming right up to date we rejoice in the appearance last year of *East End, West End*, the work of our patron, Professor Maurice Beresford. We record too with thankfulness the lectures given in winter months, and the summer excursions, activities which have been a most useful means of widening the society's specialist knowledge. Nor must we forget the collection, which has continued to be made, of books and maps, pictures and drawings, coins and medals, lantern slides, and other items, all within the purpose of a society such as ours.

The whole range of work which the society has sponsored from its beginnings has its own intrinsic worth, but I should like to suggest that it is of additional and unique importance. All the time it has been uncovering the roots of our city of Leeds, an uncovering of roots, which in our increasingly rootless national life, is so worthwhile. I wish therefore to say something about our roots and, as Thoresby himself was a devout Christian, to speak, with one exception, about our Christian roots. The Saxon Cross in this church reminds us that these roots go back very many centuries, but, for the purpose of this sermon, I shall begin with Kirkstall Abbey, a monastic ruin, with which the Thoresby Society, from its earliest days, has had links, not least in the excavation work which has been carried out and recorded.

As is well known, Kirkstall was one of a number of Cistercian houses founded in Yorkshire in the twelfth century. This development was part of the rapid growth of the early Cistercian Order in Europe, which, in turn, springs from the remarkable influence of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, who died in 1153, about the time of the start at Kirkstall. St. Bernard was a mystic, whose whole life was ruled by an intense love for God. Indeed he lived in order to be faithful, as he saw it, to our Lord's first command, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength', which is the foundation of the Christian spiritual life. The Christian spiritual life! What more virile root could we possibly have in the history of Leeds? May Kirkstall Abbey ever remind us of this!

From the twelfth century, we pass on to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and to John Harrison, who, like Thoresby, was one of our greatest citizens. He was a son of the Reformation, and, within that tradition, he was a man of prayer. And how splendidly he translated his prayer life into good works! He provided a market cross; he rebuilt the grammar

school on land of his own; he built and endowed the lovely church of St. John, Briggate, a pioneering event at the time; he provided almshouses for aged and sick people; he joined with others in acquiring the manorial rights from the Crown; and he took a lead in petitioning for a Royal Charter for Leeds, which was granted by King Charles I in 1626. If St. Bernard tried to keep our Lord's first command, Harrison certainly tried to keep the second, 'Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself', another root in the life of Leeds.

Speaking of Harrison leads me once again to mention Thoresby, who stands for something very important in Christian experience which is all too often forgotten — the offering to God of our intellectual gifts, that He may consecrate them. How very, very greatly we need such offering and consecration in our own day!

Our Christian roots continued to grow, and we think of Walter Farquhar Hook, the famous nineteenth-century vicar of Leeds, and the builder of this present parish church of St. Peter at Leeds. His monumental work was secured by the passing of the Leeds Vicarage Act of 1844, which divided the ancient parish, and provided separate parishes, churches, schools and parsonage houses, covering the whole area of Leeds. As he himself said, 'We must never rest until we have provided for every poor man a pastor, and for every poor child a school.' It was Hook who appointed Samuel Sebastian Wesley, the leading Church musician of the time, as organist here at the Parish Church. The result was far-reaching, for it established a tradition of daily sung services of the highest standard, which has been continued ever since.

I mentioned a moment or two ago the importance of the offering to God, for His consecration, of our intellectual gifts. Of equal importance is the offering and consecration of our artistic gifts, which the choir of this church constantly seeks to do. Part of Hook's ministry lay in his valiant efforts in support of the Ten Hours' Bill, one of the landmarks in safeguarding children against rapacious employers, and also in his deep involvement in caring for the sick during the typhus and cholera outbreaks. The basis of Hook's work was his profound understanding of the place of the Church in the Christian life, a principle which we have so much neglected at our peril. It is one of our deepest roots.

I gladly now make mention of other Christian traditions, all of them adding to our roots. Across the river, stands Salem Church, formerly Congregational, now United Reformed. Outstanding in its history was the wonderful joint ministry of Bertram Smith and Francis Wrigley, covering a period of nearly forty years up to 1929. Long before many others, they were preaching the social aspect of the Gospel, and the need for a truly Christian economy. Theirs was no sentimental appeal, and year after year they were able to attract a thousand men to their Sunday afternoon meetings. What a great achievement! And much of it is summed up in Smith's

words, 'God has placed us in an imperfect world to give us the chance of becoming men.'

About the end of this period, the Methodists, who for well over a hundred years had had a good following, and were very influential, raised up two famous preachers of the Gospel at Brunswick Church. They were Leslie Weatherhead and William Sangster, who drew large numbers and had lasting influence. In the nineteenth century, the Baptists provided two Members of Parliament for Leeds, Sir George Goodman and Sir John Barran. The Baptists did good work at the lower end of the social scale, and were known for the strictness of their rules. They were leaders too in the Temperance Movement, which in fact enjoyed the whole-hearted support of all the Free Churches.

We think also of the growth of the Roman Catholic Church during the last two hundred years. Nationally, this followed the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 and, particularly, the Irish immigration after the potato famines in their country in the 1840s, and then the restoration of the hierarchy in 1850. Many of the Irish came here and settled in the eastern part of the town. The Roman Catholic contribution to our life has been great, and we should perhaps single out what they have done for the poor, and their work in education and in public life.

I said that I would make one exception when speaking about our Christian foundations, and this I do now in saying a word about the Jewish addition to the roots of our city. There were Jewish people in Leeds from the earliest years of the last century, at first very few in numbers, though increasing until the eighties and nineties, when what had been a trickle and then a small stream, became a flood, following the pogroms in eastern Europe. The result is that we now have a considerable Jewish population, which has made a real contribution to our common life. We recall their share in the building up of the clothing trade, and their part in the medical and legal professions. We are thankful too for their enrichment of our cultural life, for the high standard of their care of the infirm, and for the quality of their home life. May this Jewish immigration help us in our approach to the immigration problems of the present time.

How vitally important are the roots of our great city of Leeds, and, therefore, how valuable has been and is the work of the Thoresby Society in its uncovering of these roots. Let us in Leeds Parish Church this morning thank God for the founding of the society a hundred years ago, for its scholarship and for the dissemination of its learning, to our common benefit. Please God, we and our whole generation, may seek to go on building a city worthy of our inheritance.

COUNCIL 1989

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APPENDIX — THORESBY SOCIETY 1889–1989

PRESIDENTS

1889–1906	Colonel E. Wilson, FSA
1906–1912	J. Rawlinson Ford, LLD
1912–1915	Revd C. Hargrove, MA
1915–1921	Ven. Archdeacon H. Armstrong Hall
1921–1924	J. E. Bedford, FGS.
1924–1934	Rt Revd Lord Bishop of Knaresborough, Dr. L. Smith, DD
1934–1939	Prof. A. Hamilton Thompson, CBE, FSA, FBA
1939–1943	Lt. Col. E. Kitson Clark, MA, FSA
1943–1945	Prof. A. S. Turberville, MC, MA
1946–1949	R. Offor, BA PhD
1949–1955	Prof. J. Le Patourel, MA, DPhil
1955–1965	Rev. Canon R. J. Wood, MA
1965–1968	J. Sprittles
1969–1972	C. A. Lupton, MC, MB, FRCS
1972–1976	G. Black, MB, BS, FRCS
1976–1980	G. Woledge, BA
1980–1985	G. C. F. Forster, BA, FSA, FRHistS
1985–1988	Mrs R. S. Mortimer, BA
1988–1994	E. A. Elton, MA

HONORARY SECRETARIES

1889–1890	Prof. C. Ransome, MA
1890–1891	H. M. Stephens
1891–1894	G. D. Lumb, FSA with J. W. Morkill, MA
1894–1902	G. D. Lumb, FSA with E. Kitson Clark, MA
1902–1903	G. D. Lumb, FSA with W. H. Witherby, MA
1903–1908	G. D. Lumb, FSA with B. P. Scattergood, MA, FSA
1908–1909	B. P. Scattergood, MA, FSA
1909–1917	B. P. Scattergood, MA, FSA with C. A. Town, MA, LLB
1917–1924	B. P. Scattergood, MA, FSA with H. W. Thompson
1924–1927	H. W. Thompson with E. D. James
1927–1929	H. W. Thompson with R. C. Darcy Hann, MB, ChB, BA
1929–1941	W. S. Theaker, LLB with J. G. Clark
1941–1946	Miss A. G. Foster, BA
1946–1966	K. J. Bonser, ARIBA
1966–1981	D. Keighley
1982–1993	D. M. Watson, MA

HONORARY LIBRARIANS/CURATORS

1889–1891	Revd C. Hargrove, MA
1891–1893	W.T. Lancaster

1893–1914	S. Denison, FSA
1914–1920	S. Denison, FSA with J. Singleton
1920–1927	Miss E. Hargrave
1927–1933	Miss E. Hargrave with L. Whinkup (Hon. Assistant Librarian)
1933–1935	Miss E. Hargrave and J. W. Walker
1935–1939	J. W. Walker
1940–1960	G. E. Kirk, MA
1960–2001	Mrs G. C. F. Forster, MA

HONORARY EDITORS

1891–1928	G. D. Lumb acted both as editor of texts and general editor until elected Honorary Editor
1928–1939	G. D. Lumb, FSA
1939–1944	W. B. Crump, MA
1945–1946	W. B. Crump, MA and F. Beckwith, MA
1947–1954	F. Beckwith, MA, BA
1955–1970	Mrs A. G. Foster, BA and Mrs R. S. Mortimer, BA
1971–1972	Miss V. H. F. A. Hinton, BA, ALA and Mrs R. S. Mortimer, BA
1973–1974	Miss V. H. F. A. Hinton, BA, ALA, Mrs R. S. Mortimer, BA and Mrs W. B. Stephens, BA
1974–1980	Mrs R. S. Mortimer, BA and Mrs W. B. Stephens, BA
1981–2000	Mrs P. S. Kirby, BA, MPhil and Mrs W. B. Stephens, BA

HONORARY TREASURERS

1889–1891	J. Stansfeld
1892–1904	E. Wilson, FSA
1905–1925	G. D. Lumb, FSA
1926–1933	T. Walker
1934–1954	H. Pemberton
1954–1962	R. G. Rawnsley, FCCS
1962–1972	E. Rodway, FCA
1972–1979	E. L. Empsall
1980–1994	G. A. Ascough, FCA

PREMISES

1889–1896	Rented rooms in the Leeds Municipal Buildings
1896–1925	The old Medical School in Park Street, Leeds, purchased jointly with the YAS
1925–1968	House at 16 Queen Square, Leeds (purchased by the Society)
1968–	Claremont, Clarendon Road, Leeds, rooms rented from the YAS

THE THORESBY SOCIETY

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR LEEDS AND DISTRICT FOUNDED 1889

The purpose of the society is to encourage the study of the history of Leeds and its neighbourhood through an annual programme of lectures, excursions to places of interest and publications. Many of these publications are still available for purchase. Among them are:

The Monuments of the Parish Church of St Peter-at-Leeds
by Margaret Pullan (2nd Series vol. 17, 2007, price £24.50)

A Survey of Plate in Leeds Parish Church and its Ancient Chapelries
by Joseph Sprittles (Monograph II, 1951, price £4.50)

Social Reform in Victorian Leeds: the Work of James Hole
by J. F. C. Harrison (Monograph III, 1954, price £4.50)

*East End, West End: the Face of Leeds During Urbanisation,
(1684–1842)*
by Maurice Beresford (vols. LX & LXI, 1988, price £17.95)

The Georgian Public Buildings of Leeds and the West Riding
by Kevin Grady (vol. LXII, 1989, price £9.50)

R. D. Chantrell, Architect: his Life and Work in Leeds, 1818–1847
by Christopher Webster (2nd Series vol. 2, 1992, price £10.00)

*Anglican Resurgence under W. F. Hook in Early Victorian Leeds:
Church Life in a Nonconformist town, 1836–1851*
by Harry W. Dalton (2nd Series vol. 12, 2002, price £15)

More Annals of Leeds 1880–1920
by William Benn (2nd Series vol. 15, 2005, price £22)

Please note that postage and packing are in addition to the prices quoted and will vary depending on the publication required.

All enquiries regarding membership and publications should be made to:

The Thoresby Society
23 Clarendon Road
Leeds LS2 9NZ

The society may also be contacted by telephoning Leeds (0113) 247 0704.

Further details of the society's role, available publications and other useful information can be seen on our web site at www.thoresby.org.uk.

Our centenary volume appropriately focuses on the years when Ralph Thoresby lived in the town of Leeds; the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Joan Kirby provides an invaluable study of the aldermen of the town during that time whilst Gordon Forster has re-drafted a series of four lectures on seventeenth-century Leeds which look at the incorporation of the borough, the first charter of the town, and Leeds during the Civil War and the Restoration periods. He has also provided a detailed history of the Thoresby Society itself. We are particularly delighted to be able to include Maurice Beresford's draft of Samuel Buck's *Prospect of Leedes in Yorkshire From Chaveler Hill* although he died before being able to produce a final manuscript. In addition, we have also included, the centenary sermon delivered to the society in the parish church by the Revd Canon K. H. Stapleton and a list of the officers of the society and its premises from 1889 to 1989.

Joan Kirby, a vice-president of the Thoresby Society, was its editor from 1981 to 2000. She has contributed to *Northern History* and the Thoresby Society publications and her editing of *The Manor and Borough of Leeds, 1425–1662, an edition of documents* became a major society publication.

Gordon Forster, a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, editor of *Northern History* and vice-president of the Thoresby Society, has contributed to many academic publications including the Victoria County History, the Transactions of the Royal Historical Society and, the Yorkshire Archaeological Journal. From 1980 to 1985 he was president of the Thoresby Society and is currently its deputy president.

The late Maurice Beresford, patron of the society from 1982 to 2005, became the first Professor of Economic History at the University of Leeds. His various publications, like his archaeological work at the deserted medieval village at Wharram Percy brought him national recognition whilst his monograph *East End, West End: the Face of Leeds during Urbanisation 1684–1842* for the Thoresby Society is the definitive work on the subject. He died in 2005.



